

Fleet & Safety

PART 2

Assessing drivers is the first step to reducing risk, but fleets still need to be prepared for involvement in a fatal road collision

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Identify risk to improve safety

Online assessments are a useful tool to help companies keep drivers safe from harm

By Will Murray

Research director, Interactive Driving Systems

Driver risk assessment, monitoring and improvement is important to organisations requiring their people to travel – for business, legal, financial, safety and even societal reasons.

As a basic compliance-led starting point, the *Health & Safety Executive Guidance Driving at work: managing work-related road safety* says: "Organisations need to risk assess the safety of their drivers, vehicle and journeys."

Risk assessments for any work-related driving activity should follow the same principles as those for any other work activity. They should identify and document potential hazards, assess who might be harmed and take reasonable measures to help protect drivers from harm.

A range of approaches are available for driver risk assessment, including combinations of in-vehicle assessments, psychometric tests and online assessments. Each is important, depending on the nature of the work and operating environment.

Over the past decade, a number of online programmes have been developed promising many benefits – particularly around costs compared to face-to-face assessments, reduced 'time off the tools' for employees and lower risks.

Online tools allow everyone who drives on business to be included in a programme that traditionally may have catered only for specialist commercial vehicle drivers.

ONLINE ASSESSMENTS

An online assessment programme requires drivers to log on to a secure internet portal and answer a series of questions, which will then generate a ranking. More often than not, this ranking is based on red, amber and green traffic lights to symbolise high, medium and low risk drivers which can then be utilised in the following situations:

- Pre-employment: recruitment pre-screening, at interview, during induction and for new employee training.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

Online driver risk assessments allow companies to include all staff who drive on business in a programme which traditionally may have catered only for specialist commercial drivers. Risks can then be assessed which will identify drivers who need training, allowing the company to reduce the number of road accidents and reduce costs

- Current staff: part of the permit-to-drive process, for selecting instructors and assessors, to evaluate training needs and review the success of training and for post-collision investigation purposes.

- To drive policy and process compliance, allocate company and hire cars, engage drivers in cash-for-car and own-vehicle schemes, underwriting and vehicle hire.

Depending on the background and origins of the online assessment supplier, the emphasis and content of the various assessment tools available will vary.

Typically, most tools focus on the exposure levels of the driver, the type of vehicle they use and journeys they undertake, as well as testing combinations of their attitude, behaviour, knowledge and hazard perception. Interventions such as feedback, training, workshops or one-to-ones will then be allocated on the basis of the risks identified.

HIGH RISK = HIGH COLLISION RATES

The graph (*below left*) shows the relationship between the RoadRisk assessment outcomes from an Interactive Driving Systems fleet customer and average driver claim rate for a business with about 4,000 drivers. The principles are the same for any size of fleet.

Participants identified as high risk on the assessment are the same drivers who have the highest collision rate. It gives the organisation the opportunity to undertake relevant next steps and interventions (*see table, opposite*).

Online risk assessments have traditionally worked in the following way:

- 1 Driver profile, a question-based review of each participant's personal risk exposure, the vehicle they drive and the journeys they make. As well as good practice, it also helps meet health and safety requirements for risk assessment in line with the HSE guidance mentioned above.

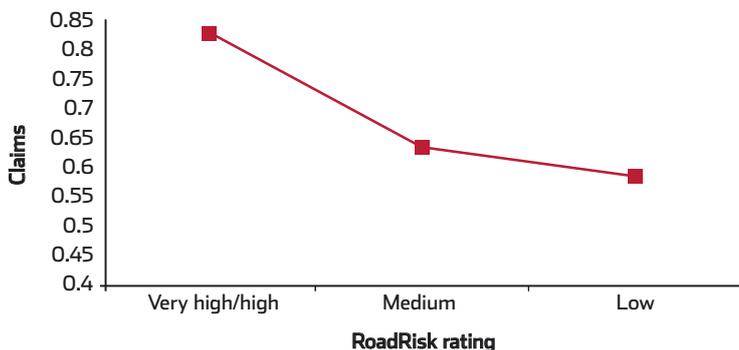
- 2 Defensive driving, a question-based assessment of participant attitude, behaviour, knowledge of the Highway Code and hazard perception on the road.

- 3 Driver feedback, which reviews participant responses, providing good practice guidance, details of next steps and completion certificates.

Data should then feed into an online management system, with recommendations for appropriate interventions made.

BT's online assessment and engagement process has involved more than 80,000 employees since 2001. As

ROADRISK ASSESSMENT AND CLAIM RATE RELATIONSHIP





NEXT STEPS AND INTERVENTION OPTIONS

RISK RATING	% OF DRIVERS	TYPICAL INTERVENTIONS
High risk	From 2% to 20%	Road risk profile and defensive driving feedback Computer-based training (CBT) One-to-one with manager Group-based session In-vehicle session if required Relevant CBTs and communications as required
Medium risk	From 40% to 70%	Profile and road risk feedback Computer-based training (CBT) One-to-one with manager if required Group-based session if required In-vehicle session if required Relevant CBTs and communications as required
Low risk	From 10% to 50%	Profile and road risk feedback Relevant CBTs and communications as required

compliance has increased and programmes have become more robust, its claim rate and costs have reduced.

The company has also successfully used its risk assessment programme to drive organisational policy and process by working with line managers and drivers to promote compliance and target interventions on the basis of risk resulting in safer travel.

NEXT STEPS

Online risk assessments are only part of a risk management system focusing on policy, compliance, leadership, mobility management, driver well-being, vehicle management, collision management and stakeholder engagement.

They are also being integrated with information from other sources, such as collisions and claims, licence checks, in-vehicle telematics systems, fuel, tyres, observed violations, tachographs and training, to provide an overall picture of risks from which effective interventions can be developed.

Most tools focus some attention on the exposure levels of the driver

MANAGING AND REDUCING HIT WHILE PARKED EVENTS

Online assessments tackle driver behaviour behind the wheel but how can you tackle the growing issue of 'hit while parked' incidents?

Damage caused in this way accounts for up to 18% of all collisions reported in the UK, and about 15% of the cost. Will Murray offers a number of suggestions to better manage the situation.

- Implement detailed procedures, coaching, guidance, rules and work instructions for drivers, managers and workshop staff.
- Ensure that when hit while parked incidents are reported by drivers they give complete information on the exact time, location address and event type.
- Better reporting, recording, investigation and analysis of incidents and locations to identify at-risk staff and hot-spots.
- Ask drivers to report incidents to the

police and obtain a crime number – it can reduce numbers substantially.

- Develop a campaign through communications, safety committees, investigations and training.
- Ensure that the correct vehicles are being allocated to the correct jobs.
- Use plug-and-play or mobile phone-based telematics to monitor vehicles and drivers involved in repeat events.
- Target coaching interventions at parking and manoeuvring, and the importance of honest and accurate claims reporting by drivers.
- Making hit while parked an at-fault incident type when there is no known third party or witness; or changing the name to 'inappropriate parking'.
- Risk assessment of locations, such as car parks and customer sites, where there are recurring problems.

SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Selwyn Cooper,
head of business sales, Volvo Car UK



At Volvo, we have a straightforward strategy for our business customers.

We believe it is in everyone's interests for us to make their lives as easy as possible.

That's why we build cars that are cost-effective to run, tax-efficient to procure and way ahead of the competition in terms of safety.

It's also why we've teamed up with driver compliance specialist Fleet21 to launch the Co-Pilot Safer Car, Safer Driver initiative.

This helps fleet operators discharge their legal obligations towards employees who drive for work.

Whether a member of staff drives a company car or their own vehicle, employers are legally responsible for their safety and well-being during business miles. If a company is shown to be negligent in this regard and their employee is involved in an accident, they could be open to litigation and even criminal prosecution.

This makes it imperative to do what's required by law in the area of driver safety.

Thanks to Co-Pilot, Volvo customers have everything they need to do right by their staff, from providing a driver policy handbook to controlling mobile phone use on the move and carrying out up-to-date driving licence checks.

Co-Pilot is based on an alliance of like-minded companies, convened by Volvo and Fleet 21 and including Specsavers, Roadhawk, HERE Maps, Romex and many more.

Together, we're working to make it as easy as possible for businesses to look after their fleet drivers. That way we can fulfil our twofold mission to serve the business community and deliver ever-higher standards of road safety in the UK.

■ Find out more at www.volvocars.co.uk/co-pilot or call the Volvo Car Business Centre on 0345 600 4027





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How to cut your reversing risk

Assessing your fleet is the first step to a safe reversing policy

By Will Murray, Interactive Driving Systems

Approximately 25% of all reported collisions arise from vehicles reversing, according to insurance claims data and research by the University of Huddersfield. Among some vehicle types, it is many more.

Many such collisions never even make it into an organisation's insurance records, being dealt with instead as routine vehicle maintenance costs. For this reason, companies are often ignorant of the reversing risk until someone has been killed or seriously injured.

Applying a range of appropriate management (e.g. analysis and review), site (e.g. risk assessment), driver (e.g. assessment/training) and vehicle (e.g. reversing cameras and alarms) interventions can help organisations to be more proactive and cut their costs and risks.

PROACTIVE APPROACH

The starting point is to understand the extent of the risk.

Insurance claims data gives a good indication of the scale of the problem. The table below shows:

- 15% of van claims involved reversing/backing
- 19% of HGV claims involved reversing/backing
- 10% of company car claims involved reversing/backing

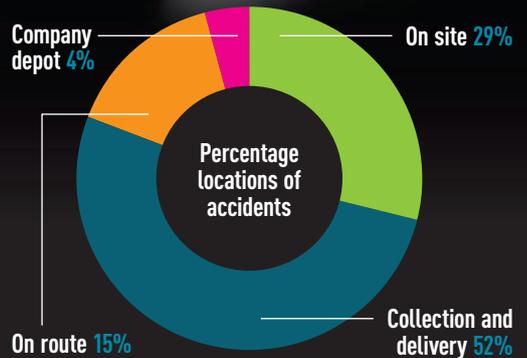
After years of reviewing fleet collision data, Andy Cuerden, from Interactive Driving Systems, says: "Because of the relatively low impact speed, many people don't regard reversing as a significant hazard. However, reversing/backing and slow speed manoeuvring incidents make up a large proportion of fleet collision costs."

A 'gap analysis' will help you address the reversing issue – a sample is available on the *Fleet News* website www.fleetnews.co.uk/gap-analysis.

The higher your score, the safer the systems of work you have in place for vehicle reversing. It can be applied on an annual basis to review progress, covering:

- 1 Operational analysis and statistics
- 2 Site procedures and operations
- 3 Vehicles
- 4 People

"All drivers must exercise greater care when reversing, especially drivers visiting customer sites and homes"



Locations where reversing collisions take place (figures from a typical multi-drop fleet operation)

TOP TIPS TO REDUCE REVERSING INCIDENTS

All drivers should be encouraged to adopt the following advice for safe reversing/backing:

- Walk around the vehicle and look for obstacles or hazards before moving.
- Always beware of pedestrians, but especially children. They are unpredictable!
- Reverse slowly – turn your head, use your mirrors and check both sides.
- Avoid reversing over a long distance.
- Look behind before reversing – not as you take off.
- When reversing and turning, remember to watch the front of your car as well.
- If towing a trailer, practice reversing with the trailer in a safe location.
- Where possible, reverse or 'pull through' into parking spaces rather than out of them.

■ For more information on reducing reversing incidents, go to www.virtualriskmanager.net

MOTOR FLEET INSURANCE CLAIMS

Vehicle type	Forward	%	Unknown	%	Parked	%	Reversing	%	Stationary	%	Total
Car	7,116	25%	5,098	18%	11,167	40%	2,877	10%	1,999	7%	28,257
Heavy commercial	1,329	38%	442	13%	869	25%	654	19%	227	6%	3,521
Light commercial	14,018	30%	6,428	14%	16,043	34%	6,799	15%	3,341	7%	46,629
Other	160	16%	536	54%	213	21%	63	6%	24	2%	996
All vehicle types	22,623	28%	12,504	16%	28,292	36%	10,393	13%	5,591	7%	79,403

Source: IDS



Be prepared for the worst: it could happen

Dealing with fatalities is a 'horrible experience', says Geoff Wright. It's vital for fleets to do everything possible to operate in a safe and legal way. *Simon Harris* reports

Dealing with a fatal road accident has horrific consequences for the family and friends of those affected by the loss.

But when a company vehicle is involved, the human impact also reaches those employees whose responsibility it is to liaise with parties involved in the aftermath.

Geoff Wright, chief fleet engineer at CM Downton, has had to deal with two fatal accidents during his long career as a fleet manager.

He was invited to speak at the *Fleet News* Congress in October, giving attendees an insight into the various stages of an accident investigation.

As a former *Fleet News* Award winner, he knows that even organisations that follow best practice to the letter can't always prevent fatal accidents involving their employees.

"Don't be complacent," he said. "This is happening all the time. I didn't think it would happen to me and it did. It could happen to you."

'THIS WAS A HARROWING EXPERIENCE'

Wright describes dealing with a fatal accident as a "horrible experience", and outlined the two incidents he dealt with at previous employers to the *Fleet News* Congress delegates.

The first incident was a company car driver that lost control of a vehicle on an icy road and died in a crash with a lorry; the second involved a third party who died in a collision with a lorry on his fleet.

Regarding the first incident, he said: "We knew how serious it had become when our company secretary was warned that, if the vehicle was defective, there could be a caution.

"The logbook, MOT, tyre records and others were needed for the investigation.

"I had to go to coroners' court where I met the family of the deceased driver.

"This was another harrowing experience. The impact of these incidents is huge."

He said that fleet managers should ensure they do everything possible to operate in a safe and legal way.

"Ensure you have all your information to hand," he said, "Another question I would ask you is, when your drivers are doing their daily work, what is their day like?"

"When our car driver was investigated the police asked for a diary because they wanted to know what time she started, where she had to travel to, how long was the day and when



Geoff Wright: 'I didn't think it would happen to me and it did.'

she went home. That's the sort of depth they go into, so just think that process through."

Wright pointed out that an HGV fleet's vehicles have tachographs and it is a "far more documented process" than with company car drivers.

HGV drivers also accept that their primary role is driving, but a company car driver might not see it that way.

"They might be a sales person or a merchandiser, but actually their primary role is a driver when you think about the mileage they do," Wright said.

"But do they think of it that way? Does your company think of them in that way?"

"Make sure everybody in your company, right from the very top all the way down, is aware."

The police will want to understand the culture in the organisation.

"The records are one thing, but the police will also be investigating the company's approach to the safety of their employees," Wright said.

"They will ask questions that will give them an insight into how the company treats safety.

"Do not be complacent – it does happen. And when it does it's a horrible experience.

"You can't actually get your head round how you feel. I was completely innocent, it doesn't make you feel any better when there has been a loss of life.

"I hope you don't go through it, but if you do, be sure that you have got everything in place because it will get looked at."

■ **For more advice on being prepared to deal with a fatal road accident, turn to page 45**

"I was completely innocent. It doesn't make you feel any better when there has been a loss of life"

Geoff Wright, chief fleet engineer, CM Downton



PUT YOUR FLEET IN SAFE HANDS

Volvo's Co-Pilot helps fleet managers keep employees safe on the road

Volvo has always built the safest cars in the world. But safety is about more than technology and engineering: it's about people.

Driver behaviour is a major factor in the majority of road accidents. So to improve road safety we need to train and educate drivers to minimise risk.

A moral and legal obligation

For fleet operators, this is both a moral obligation and a legal requirement. From a health and safety perspective, driving a car is as important as any other work activity – if not more so.

Which is why Volvo has partnered with Fleet21 and a group of other likeminded organisations to develop Co-Pilot, a suite of services, resources and expertise for reducing the risks and costs of business driving.

Co-Pilot is the only offering of its kind in the UK market, and is available free of charge when you buy or lease your first new Volvo for your business.

Comprehensive driver policies

Co-Pilot includes a free driver compliance toolkit for up to 20 employees, containing a comprehensive set of driver policy documents that will enable managers to easily meet all of their compliance obligations.

“An employer’s obligations extend beyond the people who drive company cars,” says Volvo’s Head of Business Sales, Selwyn Cooper. “They are also responsible for people who drive their own cars for work, and become part of the so-called ‘grey fleet’. By providing detailed guidance about the behaviour



expected of all employees when travelling for work, the Co-Pilot programme helps fleet operators ensure they have every base covered, including carrying out risk assessments and licence checks on company drivers.”

Discounted advice and support

In addition, Co-Pilot offers a range of discounts from partner organisations like Specsavers, Roadhawk, HERE Maps and more, all directed to improving safety and compliance.

“We want to achieve two things with Co-Pilot” continues Selwyn Cooper, summarising the Co-Pilot offer.

“To help company car drivers stay as safe as possible, and to make it straightforward for our business customers to comply with health and safety legislation.”



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British Gas has reduced cost, protected the brand and saved lives – thanks to making road safety its fleet priority. *Sarah Tooze* reports



If you asked me 'what gets you out of bed every day?' it's protecting the brand and our employees," says Jon York, road safety manager at British Gas.

"We recognise that driving is probably the most dangerous thing that people do every day and the one thing we don't want is for any of our employees, or a third party, to be harmed."

York was recently promoted from fleet operations manager, where risk management was part of his role, to being a full-time road safety manager.

"It's about dedicating all of my time to building on the great initiatives we've already got and looking at some new interventions," he explains.

Since launching its risk management programme in 2007, British Gas has achieved a 30% reduction in its collision rate and saved millions of pounds – despite the fleet increasing as a result of business growth and acquisition. Last year alone, British Gas reduced its vehicle claims by £1 million.

The savings have been achieved by having fundamentals in place, such as a group standard for driving on company business, driver handbooks, licence checking, risk assessments and driver training.

But it has also been about pushing the boundaries – British Gas was one of the first fleets to fit speed limiters to its vans, something

which is now commonplace among major van operators.

In his new role, York is targeting a 5-10% reduction in British Gas's collision rate and a 10% reduction in costs.

Until recently, British Gas measured its collision rate as a percentage of its fleet size but it has switched to a mileage ratio which reflects the fact that different parts of the business cover different mileages.

York has identified that young van drivers (those aged under 25) are the most at-risk group – an issue which British Gas is addressing with its Young Driver Academy (*see panel overleaf*).

Data is crucial to determine levels of risk.

British Gas has developed a Driver Risk Management System (DRMS) with its fleet management provider Hitachi Capital Commercial Vehicle Solutions, which pulls in data from a number of areas, including licence checking, collision history, maintenance spend on the vehicle, fuel economy and tyre replacement.

Drivers are allocated risk points, which result in a red (10 or more points), amber (seven to nine points) or green (six or fewer points) status.

"If you get an endorsement on your driving licence you get three risk points," York explains. "If the vehicle has been written off, that's six points."

"In the early days it was just a spreadsheet with some macros but now it's a web portal to which all of our managers have access."

"The RAG (red, amber, green) system identifies the drivers that need our support and they'll either go through driver development or a safety review."

A safety review is an informal discussion with the





“We recognise that driving is probably the most dangerous thing people do every day”

Jon York, British Gas



MOBILE PHONE POLICY

British Gas introduced a new mobile phone policy in January 2012, banning the use of mobile phones while driving.

“The issue is that it is a distraction,” says York.

“We looked at all the information out there from the Transport Research Laboratory and Brake and the casualty rate is horrendous.”

The new policy initially had a “mixed reaction” from drivers, but as awareness of the risks of using mobile phones while driving has risen, the policy has become “accepted practice”.

Everyone has a part to play in adhering to the policy, according to York. Managers, for instance, do not telephone an engineer when they know they are driving.

York checks driving licence records for any endorsements for mobile phone use.

Members of the public are also able to telephone a number on an engineer’s van if they spot a driver using their phone while driving.

Any complaints are escalated to the driver’s line manager and may result in disciplinary action.



driver, typically involving health and safety, fleet and trade union representatives.

“It’s an open and honest conversation,” York says. “We review the reasons why they have had multiple collisions or driving licence endorsements. Then we put them through some additional driver development and ask them to return in a month’s time and discuss what has changed.”

All new employees (above the age of 25) go on a BTEC Level 3 Advanced Driving course with Fleet Master as part of their induction. Employees that drive more than 25,000 miles a year or have two or more collisions go on a driver development course.

There is flexibility for line managers concerned about an employee’s driving to request driver training for them.

British Gas’s 4,000 grey fleet drivers are next on the training agenda. More than 1,000 are already enrolled on Business Driver’s e-learning course and will take modules on eco-driving and advanced driving.

The majority of grey fleet drivers are happy to take part.

York says: “We have one or two who say ‘why are you picking on me?’ Our response is ‘you’re claiming business mileage so we need to make sure that you’re safe.’”

British Gas has recently introduced interactive workshops to raise awareness of the risks of driving on business.

“We get a number of engineers and managers together in a room and ask them about where collisions occur and why,” York says.

“Then we run them through actual statistics about the number of collisions on motorways, rural roads and urban areas.

“A lot of people think ‘it will never happen to me’ but it might happen to you or someone you know.”

Senior managers, health and safety representatives and trade union members meet with the fleet team on a monthly basis as part of a safety governance group.

“We look at personal safety and working in customers’ homes

Jon York: promoted to full-time road safety manager





“We look at personal safety and working in customers’ homes but road safety is a key item on the agenda. You’ve got to have every level of the business on board for road safety initiatives to work”

but road safety is a key item on the agenda,” York says.

“You’ve got to have every level of the business on board for road safety initiatives to work.”

British Gas uses a news app, as well as its intranet, to communicate road safety messages to employees.

Current communications include a winter readiness campaign called FROST (suitable Footwear, Road risks, look after Others (in particular vulnerable customers), Safety first, cold Temperatures trigger health issues) and ‘Look out for each other’ – the theme for Brake’s Road Safety Week.

All A-pillars in British Gas’s vans now have stickers to remind drivers about the need to look out for cyclists or motorcyclists that may be in their blind-spot.

“The other week an engineer said, ‘it’s a great idea because you can become complacent,’” York says.

British Gas is also fitting reversing cameras to its vans. “We need to embrace technology to assist drivers,” he adds.

He plans to roll out a vehicle checking app (which British Gas developed with Fleet Master for the Young Driver Academy) to all drivers next year.

Next on the agenda is the annual audit for the Freight Transport Association’s Van Excellence programme.

York also wants British Gas to achieve the British Standards Institute ISO 39001, which rewards best practice for road traffic safety management systems.

It’s the next logical step for an organisation that puts safety first.

YOUNG DRIVER ACADEMY FOR UNDER-25s

British Gas has launched a 12-month advanced driving skills course for its 600-plus van drivers aged under 25, who are most at risk of a collision.

The Government-funded course developed by Fleet Master includes an induction, followed by six on-site visits from a Fleet Master assessor.

The benefits of the scheme include developing greater road and hazard awareness, enhanced practical driving skills, the application of pre-use vehicle safety checks, driving economically and an emphasis on developing a positive, confident attitude.

Drivers are assessed in nine areas of van operation and driving. When they have achieved competency in all mandatory areas, a portfolio of work is submitted for external evaluation and certification, leading to an Edexcel Level 2 certificate in Driving Goods Vehicles.

“After 12 months we intend to monitor this group of individuals to ensure they are the safest within the business,” says Jon York.

“We are confident that the Young Driver Academy will have an extremely positive impact on road safety and we expect other organisations to follow our lead.”

CAREER HISTORY

Jon York joined British Gas as an apprentice engineer 34 years ago. He has worked in the fleet department, which is headed by Colin Marriott, for the past 12 years, seven of which were spent as fleet operations manager.

“The beauty of being in fleet is that you get involved in every part of the business; not just one specific area,” York says.

His early career as an engineer also means he can relate to drivers.

“One of our values is ‘wear the customer’s shoes,’” he says. “So I take myself back to the role of an apprentice engineer and think about what driver training and support I would like to see if I was starting.”

FACTFILE

Organisation

Centrica/British Gas

General manager fleet

Colin Marriott

Road safety manager Jon York

Fleet size vans 12,500,
cars 2,500

Funding method cars contract hire; **vans** outright purchase

Replacement cycle cars four years/80,000 miles; **vans** six years/80,000 miles (small) or five years/100,000 miles (large)

Brands on fleet cars Audi, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen; **vans** Ford, Nissan, Vauxhall, Volkswagen

Average CO₂ emissions 112g/km



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What would you do after a road death?

Company drivers are involved in at least 24% of deaths and serious injuries on UK roads. *Sarah Tooze* finds out how Brake is training fleet managers to prepare for the worst

Hard-working employee. Loving father and husband

Any sudden traumatic death or serious injury can "impact hugely" on a company, according to Rosie Murray, disaster management specialist for Brake. It could be a death/serious injury caused by an employee, the death/serious injury of an employee, the death of a family member of an employee or a trauma experienced by an employee.

25-30%
of survivors of a serious collision will develop a full-blown post-traumatic stress disorder

"You have to be ready to deal with it appropriately and to care for those staff that have been impacted," she says.

"We're not just talking about devastation now, we're talking about devastation for years to come."

Murray has been involved in handling major national disasters such as 9/11, the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami and the 1989 Kegworth air crash, and believes that road deaths do not get as much support as they should.

"Death on the road has the same factors as a national disaster, but does not have the same support available," she says. "You do have a family liaison officer and, to some extent, health professionals and the clergy but, on the whole, there is little support.

"I've heard a family member say 'when I went home there was nobody there for me'. If your company has the right processes, the right policies and the right plans in place, that's something that you may be able to help with."

But it's not simply a 'nice to do'. Companies have a moral responsibility to look after their staff, says Murray.

"You don't want any of your staff or their families to carry anger or intense distress forward because at the time the company didn't look after them properly or acted in such a way that it caused it to happen and didn't have the necessary processes in place to ensure that the death on the road didn't occur," she adds.

UP TO 30% OF SURVIVORS SUFFER POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

Companies need to be alert to the signs of post-traumatic stress as 25-30% of survivors of a serious collision will develop a full-blown disorder that requires psychological help.

The symptoms are intrusive thoughts about the collision, flashbacks involving all the senses, loss of concentration, being irritable or bad tempered, jumping all the time and avoidance behaviour such as avoiding driving.

Counselling is not appropriate for post-traumatic stress disorder in the first month. In fact, it can make things worse.

Rather than offering counselling, listen and understand the trauma. Ask the employee 'how do you feel today compared to how you felt two weeks ago?' And help to 'normalise' their feelings.

"Remember it is a normal reaction of a normal person to an abnormal event," Murray says. "Tell them that you are not surprised about how they are feeling."

Post-traumatic stress reactions will decrease as time goes on, but if there isn't steady improvement or it is stopping them leading a normal life, they may need some help.

"It's not always screamingly obvious, it can be changes in behaviour that you need to pick up on," Murray says.

Consider whether the company can help pay for a post-traumatic stress assessment (appropriate after a month).

■ For a Brake information guide, visit fleetnews.co.uk/brake-ptsd

PREPARING FOR A POLICE INVESTIGATION

If one of your drivers is involved in a fatality while driving for work, expect to be contacted by the police.

They will want to know what risk assessments had been carried out, the company's policy on driving at work (including policies on alcohol and drug use), what driver training is





provided, when the driver's licence was last checked, whether work schedules were realistic, whether the driver had any health issues (including eyesight), records of previous collisions, the driver's familiarity with the vehicle and whether the driver was aware of their responsibilities.

A former fleet manager who was interviewed under caution following the death of one of his drivers says: "The way the police deal with an incident is very mechanical. It's a checklist – have you done this? Were you doing that?"

"If there is an element of doubt in any one of these areas, the investigating officer will drill down and potentially expose the organisation."

It is not simply about having the right policies in place, companies must be seen to be using them and employees must understand them.

"It's important to be able to say you have done everything; you have taken every precaution," says Murray.

"If the police come knocking on your door they will want to know whether you just ticked the box or whether you actually did something about it."

An external audit is a way to check whether your policies and procedures are robust. This could be done as part of the Freight Transport Association's Van Excellence programme, the road safety standard ISO 39001 from the British Standards Institute (BSI) or by your risk management provider.

"It's important to be able to say you have done everything; you have taken every precaution"

Rosie Murray, Brake



ABOVE: Fatal road accidents will be investigated by police



For more on safety, visit fleetnews.co.uk/safetymonth

FMG, for instance, offers an audit service which involves a discussion with management about what they do and how they do it, as well as selecting two or three drivers at random to ask them what their experience of the policy is and whether they know what they are responsible for, because in a police investigation both parties will be questioned.

"If the driver doesn't know about the policies and procedures they won't be able to comply and the police will very quickly pick up on that," warns Murray.

HOW THE FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER CAN HELP COMPANIES

A family liaison officer is a police officer who is trained to liaise with families following sudden traumatic death. They act as a single point of contact for the family – any questions to the family and from the family to the senior investigating officer will go through them.

"If a member of your staff dies on the road, find out who the family liaison officer is," says Murray. "They will assist you in supporting the family and can pass on information."

The company may need to speak to the family about death in service or to get the employee's pension sorted, but it may not be wise to go directly to them.

"If the family, for whatever reason, thinks the company is responsible for the death they are not going to be happy if you turn up on their doorstep," says Murray.

"If you need to see them, you need to do it with the help of the family liaison officer."

THE ROLE OF THE CORONERS' COURT/INQUEST

An unexplained death will be reported to the coroner and the coroner's officers will investigate what happened to the person by speaking to the doctors and police. The coroner will also decide if a post mortem is needed to establish the cause of death.

"The inquest will be a very difficult time," says Murray. "You need to think about how you will support the employee and/or their family."

People from the employee's company may also be called to give evidence and they may need support too.

"If you go in as a manager knowing you are in the clear and every box has been ticked and you are totally confident, it is still a very difficult situation because of the stress levels and witnessing again the distress of those people involved," says Murray.

Ultimately, it's about preparing for something that you hope will never happen, or as Murray puts it: "Every day it doesn't happen is a day closer to it happening."

Make sure you and your company are prepared.

CRISIS RESPONSE CHECKLIST

- Have you got anything in place to support bereaved staff in the event of a sudden traumatic death e.g. welfare/trauma support programme?
- What support might you be able to offer them, the bereaved family, colleagues and friends?
- What are your resources and your limitations?
- How much financial support can the company give?
- Can your firm help to pay for professional trauma therapy?
- Do you have a list of local service providers (voluntary sector, NHS and private sector) that provide support?
- Have you identified someone in the company who can talk with empathy?
- Do you know how to spot the signs of post-traumatic stress disorder?
- How long is compassionate leave?
- Do you have return-to-work assessments?
- Can you offer an alternative role rather than driving?
- Who can go to a member of staff's funeral?
- Have you got a business continuity, health and safety or HR document which states what happens in the event of a sudden traumatic death?
- Do different departments understand their role in the event of a crisis?
- Do top management, line managers, drivers and the fleet manager/advisor understand their responsibilities?
- Do you understand what is going on in the lives of bereaved families following a death on the road so as not to cause further distress and to help you empathise?



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Driver
competitions

Time for the carrot

After reducing its collision rate by 14% and saving more than £1 million by taking a 'stick' approach with its drivers, G4S Cash Solutions decided it was time to offer the 'carrot' by holding a driving competition.

Sarah Tooze reports

Darren Bell, director of fleet services at G4S UK and Ireland, readily admits that the company took a tough stance with its drivers as a part of a new road risk strategy last year.

"We drove them hard on their telematics scores," he says. "We introduced driver profiling, we tightened up on driver assessments and accident management and investigation."

This year it was "time to raise morale and get incentives in".

The-then road risk manager Jim Billings (now senior risk manager, motor at QBE Insurance) put forward the idea of a national one-day driving competition. The event, held earlier this year, was hailed a huge success by drivers and managers and has since received two internal safety awards.

Here's how they achieved it.



1 HAVE AN AIM

The best driving competitions are not simply a fun day out for the drivers; there are clear aims and the day forms part of the company's overall road risk strategy.

G4S Cash Solutions had four aims for its inaugural driving competition: increase road safety awareness, improve driving standards, improve general transport-related knowledge and foster team spirit.

"It's not about management putting on an event to pacify people; it's about genuine road safety aims, driver awareness and recognition and reward for the drivers who are performing well day in, day out on telematics," Bell says.

2 SKETCH OUT THE EVENT

Before presenting the idea to stakeholders, have a rough outline of what the competition will be like. For example, what activities should the drivers do? What venues could work? Could suppliers lend their support? How much is the event likely to cost?

3 GET HR INVOLVED

Driving competitions are about giving recognition to employees – an easy sell to the HR director. Having the support of the HR director will then help when presenting the case to the board.

Bell explained to the company's HR director that he had taken a tough stance with drivers' telematics scores and now wanted to "give some payback".

"It sends the message out that people are being rewarded for good driving behaviours," he says. "I've run these types of events before and they have huge HR benefit."

4 GET TRADE UNION SUPPORT

Like HR, trade unions can be a useful, and often essential, part of building a business case. G4S Cash Solutions has regular meetings with GMB and Bell sought the support of GMB representative Brian Terry.

Terry saw value in the event – and was a member of the winning team.

5 PRESENT THE IDEA TO THE BOARD

Convincing operational directors that they need to release a number of their drivers from their jobs for the day is arguably the biggest hurdle.

"The operational managers don't necessarily jump at it at first because all they can see is pound notes and missed labour hours," Bell says.

He convinced them that they would see the financial benefit during the qualification period for the event as drivers would be competing to have the best telematics scores, leading to reduced fuel bills, potentially lower repair costs and collisions and less vehicle downtime.

Bell also pointed out that the positive experience of drivers who took part in the competition would spur other drivers on in the future.

6 CHOOSE THE VENUE

Purpose-built test tracks are often favoured for driving competitions, but vehicle manufacturers may also be able to assist with a venue.

G4S Cash Solutions asked Mercedes-Benz, which supplies 90% of its van fleet, whether it had any suitable venues. It offered its driver training facility at Barnsley where other major fleet customers had already held similar competitions.

7 GET SUPPORT FROM SUPPLIERS

Holding a driving competition can be an expensive exercise. Hiring a driving simulator for the day, for example, could cost more than £1,000.

Then there is the expense of moving fleet vehicles to the venue, having staff man the stands/driver activities, medical cover, staff travel and subsistence, and the prizes.

G4S Cash Solutions held its one-day event for just £4,000-£5,000 thanks to getting support from its suppliers.

Its insurers funded the driving simulator, its maintenance provider BT Fleet took care of the vehicle fault clinic and, together with Peugeot, Michelin, Fiat and Mainstream Training, donated prizes.

"If you've got a good supplier base and you have the right marketing approach it can be very cost effective," Bell says.

8 DO DETAILED PLANNING

Each driver activity/stand needs to be carefully planned with consideration for health and safety.

The blindfolded manoeuvring stand, for example, could be potentially dangerous. G4S Cash Solutions reduced the risk by having designated boundaries and areas where people not participating could stand, as well as an independent safety advisor in the cab with the blindfolded driver.

"You've got to look at every stand in turn and assess any risks and make sure they're safe," Bell says.

Detailed instructions were provided for staff manning each stand.

9 COMMUNICATE TO DRIVERS

Marketing the event to the drivers through poster campaigns, emails and information on the intranet can help generate interest.

Bell says this should ideally be done three months before the competition.

10 SELECT THE DRIVERS

Telematics data is a popular way to choose which drivers to put through to the driving competition. Selection can also be based on the driver's risk profile and accident record.

G4S Cash Solutions's criteria were: no at-fault accidents within the past three years and consistently high eco scores for telematics.

It opted for five teams (two from the south, two from the north and one from the secure engineering division) with six drivers in each team.

"Originally we were going to have one entry from each region but the managers were so bought into the idea they asked for more," Bell says.

11 SET-UP/REHEARSALS

Members of the G4S Cash Solutions fleet team arrived two days before the event to help prepare the venue with Mercedes-Benz.

12 REFLECT ON THE EVENT

Post-event it is important to get feedback from all those who take part to see what went well and what could be improved in the future.

Bell hopes to expand the event next year with the entire G4S UK and Ireland region taking part, not just the Cash Solutions business unit.

He aims to hold regional qualifiers, leading up to the national final.

The business's new road risk manager Sam Weller is already working on the event with full backing from the board.





COMPETITION FORMAT

The National Safe and Skilled Driving Competition ran the stands, including practical tests, a computer-based assessment and some non-scoring stands. Teams visited each stand in turn with points deducted for each mistake made during the test. The team with the highest number of points after completing all the stands were declared the winners. There was a prize for the best team and for the best individual driver.

1 TRANSPORT KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

Drivers had to take an online test, consisting of 20 questions based on the Highway Code. They were allowed 45 seconds to answer each question. This tested the knowledge of the teams.

2 ONLINE DRIVER PROFILING ASSESSMENT

Drivers took a 30-minute online driver profiling assessment. They were assessed in four areas: observation, hazard perception, knowledge and concentration. They were given a risk rating in each area as well as an overall risk rating.

3 HGV HILL START

Drivers had to perform a hill start in an HGV with a bag of light bulbs under one of the rear tyres. If they rolled back and broke the light bulbs they lost points. They were given one attempt.

4 VEHICLE FAULT CLINIC

Drivers had 15 minutes to identify a number of faults on a standard G4S vehicle without conferring with their teammates. To make the test realistic, G4S's maintenance provider BT Fleet used a number of common faults from the G4S fleet as well as some 'red herrings'. There were 10 faults in total, but drivers were not told how many they had to find. The faults included: nearside wiper arm loose, washer tube removed, dipstick removed, front side light bulb removed, wheel nut pointers removed, tax disc swapped and defect book removed.

5 MERCEDES-BENZ UNIMOG OFF-ROAD DRIVING CIRCUIT (NON-SCORING)

Drivers took a passenger ride in a Unimog, which was driven by on-site instructor Rob Jones, of Mercedes-Benz. Jones explained the protocols and rules for driving off-road.



6 MERCEDES-BENZ SPRINTER OFF-ROAD DRIVING CIRCUIT (NON-SCORING)

Having experienced the cross-country circuit in the Unimog, drivers had the chance to drive the 4x4 Sprinter around it.



7 BLINDFOLDED MANOEUVRING

One driver from each team got behind the wheel of a Mercedes Benz Sprinter blindfolded while another member of the team gave them manoeuvring instructions. Teams lost points if they hit any of the traffic cones around the circuit. They were given three attempts, with the option of substituting a team member.



8 DRIVING SIMULATOR

After becoming familiar with the TIR mobile simulator, each driver went through two scenarios lasting two to three minutes each. One scenario tested their awareness of cyclists while the other assessed their slow speed manoeuvring ability in a confined space. Each scenario was allocated points, with drivers also given an overall score.

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THE WINNERS

Winning team: Team 4 (south region), Stuart Pemberton – Swansea, Tim Jones – Swansea, Craig Hickey – Norwich, Brian Terry – GMB



Individual driver of the year: Adam Ellingford, Bloxwich



THE TOP PRIZES

TEAM WINNERS

- Sports coupé hire on a weekend of the winner's choice (courtesy of Peugeot UK)
- Peugeot goody bag
- Engraved trophy for regional office

INDIVIDUAL DRIVER OF THE YEAR

- A training cheque (value up to £875) from Mainstream Training, G4S Cash Solutions's partnered DSA-registered driver training school, for a vocational driving/training course of the winner's choice
- Porsche driving experience at Silverstone (courtesy of Michelin)
- Glass trophy



WHAT THE DRIVERS THOUGHT

"There are things we are coming across today that I've never done before, so that will be something I talk about. Swapping to another stand every 45 minutes has kept the event alive. It's also been nice to meet other drivers – a lot of us have never met each other before, we just do the same job."

Lee Featherstone, south region, team 3

"It's been better than I expected. I liked the blindfolded manoeuvring, having to rely on someone else to navigate and direct you. The hazard perception was quite informative but the simulator wasn't as realistic as I thought it would be. It would be good if the event is held every year to get different people to come."

Adam Ellingford, individual driver of the year

"We all like to think we're professional drivers and drive in a proper manner. That's why we're here in the first place, so it's nice to meet like-minded people. The blindfolded driving was all about trust in the person giving you the instruction rather than your ability to drive. The vehicle fault clinic backed up what I do every day to make sure the vehicle is roadworthy, but it highlights to me whether I'm doing all I can."

"Hopefully those who have not been able to attend today will be inspired and realise that telematics and driver performance at the branch level can be productive for them in their own car. I know that if I transfer economical driving to my own car it's going to cost me less in fuel."

Kevin Southorn, north region, team 1

"It's been an eye-opener, especially the vehicle fault clinic. You get into the habit of doing things and it makes you realise you need to practice a bit more. The blindfolded manoeuvring was about teamwork – you are reliant on the person with the walkie-talkie. I think they got the right mix between fun activities and serious ones. It will encourage people who aren't here to think 'I'd like to go on that course next year'."

Dave Antringham, south region, team 3

"The simulator makes you think about the little things that you don't necessarily pick up on when you're driving. I can definitely transfer what I've done in the simulator to my day-to-day driving. The vehicle fault clinic was really good – there are a few things I am still kicking myself that I didn't pick up on. The event is definitely a good thing. It's educational with a bit of teamwork and a bit of fun as well, so it's a perfect blend."

Stuart Pemberton, part of the winning team 4



MORE FLEETS HARNESSING COMPETITIVE SPIRIT

G4S Cash Solutions is one of a number of fleet operators that hold driving competitions.

Saint-Gobain holds an annual Driver of the Year, Most Improved Driver of the Year and Transport Team of the Year event. Six Saint-Gobain brands compete against each in a series of tasks, including driving, manoeuvring and braking on different surfaces.

Balfour Beatty runs an annual Driver Challenge Day for its fleet drivers and supply chain as part of its Zero Harm initiative.

It aims to share best practice across the Balfour Beatty group and its suppliers, sub-

contractors and partners. Like G4S, its fleet suppliers host different challenges, with Mercedes-Benz providing vehicles and Masternaut providing telematics systems.

At the 2014 Driver Challenge Day, held at Donington Park in Derbyshire, challenge zones included ABS braking reaction time tests, vehicle checks, a van manoeuvrability time trial and a smooth driving telematics circuit.

A workshop, hosted by driver development manager Nobby Clark, looked at employee and public protection on sites, and what can be done to improve overall protection.

Prizes were donated by the sponsors, with Balfour Beatty paying for the site and catering.

Smaller fleet operators, such as Independent Group (which was named fleet of the year sub-250 vehicles at the 2011 *Fleet News Awards*), have also staged driving competitions.

Qualification criteria took into account completing business mileage returns, motoring offences and online risk assessments.

Earlier this year, the Freight Transport Association held its first Van Excellence Driver of the Year with 12 Van Excellence operators putting forward their best drivers.



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Charity is the 'well-kept secret' that is aiming to save lives

More than 50 years after the Institute of Advanced Motorists was founded, road safety remains at its heart. *Gareth Roberts* reports

A significant number of fleets are failing to keep their drivers safe, according to the boss of a leading road safety charity, who claims employees are being needlessly killed or injured because employers don't recognise their duty of care responsibilities.

"The statistics show that one in three accidents involve somebody driving for work – there's clearly a problem," says Nick Stonard, the acting chief executive of the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM).

"I still don't think there is a realisation in the corporate world of the potential liabilities and duty of care they actually have. For some large and well-known companies it's just not on their radar. It's our job to change that but, even with legislation like corporate manslaughter, there are many organisations failing to recognise their responsibilities."

The issue is not only borne out in road accident statistics, IAM's own research has discovered that only 30% of commercial drivers have ever been offered driver training.

Stonard says: "There are all sorts of good business reasons for training drivers – including reduced fuel consumption and a reduction in accidents. The benefits are obvious, but why aren't people tapping into them?"

The charity regularly contributes to the road safety debate by conducting and commissioning research, the findings of which it uses to lobby Government and to shape its own product offering.

However, the IAM's own research has shown that it isn't well-known for the work it does.

"Only a very small percentage of people have heard of us," says Stonard, who admits there is also perhaps a wider malaise. "I don't think there's an appetite for road safety – everybody thinks they're a good driver."

Either way, it's an issue for a road safety charity that must work hard to have its voice heard above other road safety organisations, charities and commercial operators.

But Stonard is confident about the charity's future prospects: "IAM is a well-kept secret and we need to stop being such a well-kept secret," he says.

That could involve the rebranding of the organisation, which was originally formed in 1956 by a group of people who wanted to improve their driving.

A name change, however, isn't on the cards.

"If I'm honest I don't like 'Institute'; 'Advanced' is a bit elitist and I struggle a bit with 'Motorists'," admits Stonard. "But I don't think we can afford to change our name."

Many fleets, not necessarily familiar with the charity, will more than likely know its business arm.

IAM Drive and Survive – previously IAM Fleet training – was founded in 1986 and as a commercial subsidiary helps fund the charity's wider work.

It's an occupational driver risk management provider, which helps companies reduce on-road incidents, minimise costs and look after their drivers.

It offers a range of training programmes and assessments, including online risk assessments, e-learning modules, seminars and workshops and on-road and on-track driver training.

FACTFILE

Company Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM)
Acting chief executive Nick Stonard
Membership circa 90,000
Founded 1956
Commercial subsidiary IAM Drive and Survive

Nick Stonard: "There are all sorts of good business reasons for driver training"

200+
affiliated local groups

30%
of commercial drivers are offered driver training

IAM ON MOBILE PHONES



The number of casualties where a driver was using a mobile phone is difficult to establish but research in simulators has shown drivers who use hands-free phones are up to four times more likely to be involved in a crash.

Texting or smartphone use while driving reduces reaction times by up to 35%. Using a phone causes

physical, visual, mental and auditory distractions, leading to significantly slower reaction times, says the IAM. Recent IAM research shows it can be more distracting than driving with alcohol or cannabis in your system and its advice is to switch off before you drive off.

The IAM makes a series of recommendations, including increasing the fines and points tally for mobile phone use encouraging companies to take a 'zero tolerance' approach to phone use when driving on business, and prosecuting those companies that actively force drivers to use mobiles when driving under corporate manslaughter or health and safety laws.

IAM ON DRINK DRIVING



The debate on the maximum permitted blood alcohol limit for drivers has been reignited following the Scottish Government's decision to lower the limit north of the border.

Surveys of the public also show a consistently high degree of support for a lower limit.

The UK legal limit was set in 1967 at a level where impairment was undeniable – 80mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood.

Recent research suggests that impairment begins at 50mg and lowering the limit could save at least 40 lives a year on Britain's roads.

The IAM acknowledges that a lower limit could risk diverting police resources from catching the most dangerous offenders who pay little regard to any limit, but it would also send a very powerful signal on drink-driving.

The IAM makes a series of recommendations, including a consultation to reflect the growing support for a lower limit among the general public and a range of influential organisations, including the police.



Its risk assessments have changed over time and now, as well as looking at driving habits, they evaluate the psychological state of the driver.

That enables the assessors to predict how a driver will react in certain situations.

Stonard explains: "The earlier forms of assessments resulted in drivers trying to second-guess and provide the answer they thought was wanted, whereas these types of questions are much more difficult to manipulate."

But if a fleet road risk strategy is going to stand any chance of success, boardroom buy-in is crucial.

"Who holds the purse strings will determine what is spent in this area," Stonard continues.

A fragile economy has seen training cut in the belief that it is not essential: "Our message is, it is and it's cost-effective," he says.

Stonard should know. He's a chartered accountant, who learned his trade in London at Price Waterhouse in the 1970s and 1980s, before it merged with Coopers and Lybrand.

He joined the IAM as finance director on an interim basis in February 2008, before joining the charity on a permanent basis in February 2010.

Today, he oversees an organisation with just over 90,000 members and 200-plus affiliated local volunteer groups. The IAM has had more than 100,000 members within its ranks in the past, but Stonard says membership is on the up again.

To become a member, you need to pass the 'advanced test', which was created by the IAM shortly after it was formed. A version for motorcyclists was developed in 1976. During 2014, up to 5,000 motorists will take the test. That compares to a peak of up to almost 9,000 in the 1990s.

"We are slightly below where we were, but then there is more pressure on people's time," says Stonard.

"Only a very small percentage of people have heard of us"

Nick Stonard, acting chief executive officer, IAM



For the latest from the IAM's Simon Elstow go to: fleetnews.co.uk/blogs

Still, the IAM hopes to have the ear of Westminster's political parties with the launch of a road safety manifesto to coincide with next May's General Election.

It is calling for urgent support from all political parties to promote driver and rider improvement on UK roads.

One of the more radical ideas in the IAM manifesto, which is designed to cut the number of road deaths and injuries annually, is a call for high-speed rural roads to be part of the driving test as well as for road safety to be part of the schools national curriculum.

It's also asking the Government to play its part by making sure that companies applying for public sector contracts have road-risk policies in place.

Stonard says: "Whenever you tender for any public sector contract these days there are various stipulations, so why shouldn't ISO 39001 [a standard for road safety traffic management] be one of them, where it's relevant to the contract?"

The IAM manifesto also calls for continuous learning for motorists, but prefers a voluntary approach rather than compulsory re-testing.

"There is evidence from overseas that if you introduce post-licence training you reduce casualties," explains Stonard, "but I don't think we want to go down the road of re-test - we need to do something for people to refresh and remind them."

Speaking at the IAM's annual lunch earlier this month, when the manifesto was launched, charity chairman Alistair Cheyne said: "In the last five years, more than 5,500 young people have been killed on our roads or had life-changing injuries. Every one of those crashes was avoidable. We need legislation, we need campaigns to nudge people towards better driving behaviour and we need more training."



How fleets played a role in Brake's Road Safety Week

Companies across the UK were keen to support the event. *Christopher Smith* reports

Brake's annual Road Safety Week acts as one of the key drivers of awareness for the safety of road users, whether on foot, cycle or in a vehicle.

Running since 1997, it is the ideal opportunity for employers and fleet operators to drive home the safety message.

Here we feature some of the events and activities that took place throughout the week.

FUEL CARD GROUP

Fuel Card Group held a Bright Day for Brake, with staff making a donation to the charity in order to wear neon clothes, fluorescent fancy dress and colourful accessories.

Steve Clarke, marketing manager at Fuel Card Group, says: "Every employer should get involved

with Brake to promote the need to take care on the road.

"We help customers address duty of care responsibilities for their staff and the public when driving for work and Road Safety Week is an excellent reminder for everyone."



Fuel Card Group employees went bright for Brake

TBR GLOBAL CHAUFFEURING



TBR Global ran workshops at Glasgow School St Rose of Lima

TBR Global Chauffeuring supported Glasgow School St Rose of Lima by running Brake's Look Out For Each Other workshops, providing parents and pupils with information on how to stay safe on the roads.

Craig Chambers, managing director of TBR Global, says: "We are delighted to support St Rose of Lima Primary to educate its pupils on the dangers of the roads.

"Brake is a charity we are passionate about because road safety matters to us. With more than 330,000 movements globally, we fully understand and appreciate the importance of road safety in protecting the public."

TRAVIS PERKINS

Travis Perkins hosted a number of activities aimed at engaging its 4,000 drivers.

They were challenged to drive remote control cars while wearing beer goggles and take part in interactive alcohol awareness quizzes, looking at how many units are in drinks, safe limits and the amount of time it takes alcohol to leave the body.

Travis Perkins also focused on driver distraction by using a machine that measured response times to demonstrate the difficulty concentrating on a primary task while having a conversation.



Northampton Saints players helped Travis Perkins mark Road Safety Week

MAGNA HOUSING GROUP

Magna Housing Group in Dorset conducted a driver training programme for more than 300 employees.

The 90-minute refresher sessions were conducted on local roads with an approved driving instructor.

Steve Fowlie, health and safety advisor at Magna, says: "We were pleased with the initial results and, with the support from Dorset County Council, were delighted to be able to extend the programme beyond our original target to include all people who drive on behalf of Magna."



Magna drivers underwent training



SKANSKA

Skanska hosted a variety of programmes throughout the week, primarily around its Hertfordshire base.

Staff at the construction and contracting company's head office were able to take advantage of free eye tests. Road safety awareness information appeared prominently on the company's intranet.

In addition, Skanska has also trained a number of 'Brake ambassadors', who are qualified to conduct various training programmes.

During Road Safety Week, workshops were delivered to 500 students at local secondary schools.

The workshops were based on Brake's 2young2die campaign which aims to educate young people about the dangers faced by road users.

Julie Madoui, head of fleet at Skanska, says: "We are committed to improving road safety and have a comprehensive programme of activities, including training, to help us meet this goal.

"Our support for Road Safety Week is part of that. We believe it's very important to educate young people about the risks they face on our roads."

Angie Prior, fleet administrator, adds: "As a young person myself, I really want to share my experiences of driving with other young people and make them aware that all road users have a responsibility to others."



Skanska delivered workshops to 500 students

MORRISON UTILITY SERVICES

The fleet team at Morrison Utility Services joined with the company's in-house safety, health, environment and quality (SHEQ) team to produce a cycling safety animation for use in local schools.

Mark Dixon, SHEQ manager, says: "For the past three years, Morrison Utility Services has supported Brake's campaigns to raise awareness of road safety within the local communities.

"This year our newly-appointed road risk manager Lee Matthews raised the bar by organising a visit to Martins Wood School.

"It was a real delight and the children seemed to really engage with the characters in the animation."

Dixon and Matthews organised a checklist competition, with prizes including Halfords vouchers to spend on accessories for their bikes and scooters.



Martins Wood School watching the cycling safety animation

Advertisement feature

Making driver-centric fleet risk management work for you

Recent research, commissioned by AA DriveTech, shows that people who drive for work ('at-work' drivers) contribute to collisions in different ways from the rest of the driving population. In particular, working car drivers are more likely to contribute to crashes because they are distracted (15% higher), commit junction errors (25% higher), fatigued (23% higher), or are following another vehicle too closely (14% higher).

Working car drivers are also twice as likely to be involved in a crash between 6am and 9am, as well as being over-represented on crashes on slip roads (28%).

The main conclusion is clear: the training needs for people who drive for work are different from the general driving population... although many employers still have the belief that if you simply have a valid licence, you're good to drive!

Our approach to fleet risk management is to place the driver at the heart of any programme.

That's why we describe

our approach of driving a better business as a 'journey' – a journey for the driver, as well as the fleet manager.

The starting point of any journey is to understand where you are going. That's why many companies start with a fleet risk survey to understand their areas of risk exposure so that these can be prioritised.

Secondly, the legal entitlement to drive is checked, sometimes visually or increasingly against the DVLA database. With the abolition of the counterpart paper licence in January 2015, employers won't be able to conduct visual checks consistently, but may need to use a third party to check their staff's licences, even if they have a relatively small fleet.

The driver's individual exposure to risk can then be identified through an online assessment, followed by driver training and coaching interventions – online, workshop or on-road – that are specific to their needs.

Make the driver the centre of your fleet risk management programme – it makes real business sense.



Contact Eloise Robb on: [0845 070 6042](tel:0845 070 6042)
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How will you ensure staff hold valid driving licences?

That's the dilemma faced by fleets seeking a licence-checking alternative following the removal of the paper counterpart. *Gareth Roberts* reports

The abolition of the paper counterpart of the photocard driving licence is just a matter of months away.

Another target of the Government's 'red tape challenge', it will eventually be consigned to the history books, like the tax disc before it, deemed surplus to requirements in a digital age.

However, the paper counterpart's demise presents fleets with a duty-of-care quandary; how will they check employees are legally entitled to drive?

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is developing an online platform to provide fleets, who currently rely on checking the paper counterpart, with a viable solution.

Called Share My Driving Record (SMDR), it is in the final phase of testing with fleets feeding back to the DVLA on how it might be improved before it goes live.

"By accessing our SMDR service, individual drivers will be able to generate a PDF document," says a DVLA spokesman.

"This will include a unique access code which third parties can use to verify the details on the document.

"Third parties can choose to accept the PDF or they may verify its information by visiting www.gov.uk and entering the access code and last eight digits of the driving licence number."

The authentication code will be time bound to ensure that the information is current at the time of issuing the PDF document.

The third party will be presented with a limited view of the driver's entitlement and endorsement information direct from DVLA's driver database.

DVLA has confirmed that its online driver licence service will 'initially' be free to fleets, but it has abandoned its original plan to abolish the paper counterpart on January 1, 2015.

"The driving licence counterpart will be abolished in early 2015," says the spokesman.

"An appropriate date is currently under consideration and will be announced in due course."

The eight million drivers who have only a paper licence will see no change – DVLA has "no plans" to recall these. In this case points will still be added to the paper licence.

However, the 33 million with both photocard and paper counterpart will be able to discard the counterpart – it will have no legal status; all updates will occur online.

The clock is ticking and fleets will have to get to grips with the new platform to complete in-house checks or outsource the checking of licences to a third-party provider.

CHECKS TAKE TIME AND RESOURCE

Malcolm Maycock, managing director of compliance company Licence Bureau, says whatever fleets decide to do, it is going to cost them money.

"Checking driving licences, whether you do it yourself or you use a third party, is a cost exercise," he says.

Maycock argues that fleets which perform licence-



"The licence counterpart will be abolished in early 2015"

DVLA spokesman

checking in-house will have to dedicate resource and time, even with the new web-based platform at their disposal.

Research suggests that licence checking is becoming an increasing focus for fleet operators.

A *Company Car Trends* report from GE Capital Fleet claims licence checking heads the shopping list of new management information systems fleets are planning to adopt.

According to the research, 30% of fleets that do not already have a solution in place are planning to adopt a licence checking system in the next 12 months. More than three-quarters (76%) have outsourced the service.

Steve Pope, fleet services manager at Morrison Plant & Fleet Services, currently outsources to a third-party.





DVLA's online licence checking system is in the final phase of testing

"I don't want to end up with a system where I have to have more input than I currently do"

Tony Leigh, PricewaterhouseCoopers



He says: "It provides an accurate assessment, removing the need for an in-house check, which can sometimes be flawed."

Having experienced manual checking in previous roles, Pope has seen the issues that can occur, from drivers holding multiple copies of their licence to the difficulties involved in foreign licence checks.

He says utilising a third-party provider brings a number of benefits, including advice from industry experts, bespoke reporting and alerts when problems occur.

Pope told *Fleet News* he had no plans to use the new DVLA system and bring the process back in-house.

It is a similar story for Tony Leigh, head of car fleet services at PricewaterhouseCoopers, who currently uses a third-party provider.

He says: "As far as I can see at the moment, we wouldn't get such a full service by using the new DVLA system."

"We get alerts if a driver has had a licence revoked or loses their licence, we get consolidated reports about what points drivers have on their licence and we have a number of other reports, such as when photocard licences expire."

"In the short term we will not be changing, but once the DVLA system has bedded in and we see what it can do, then we would obviously review our arrangements."

"But I don't want to end up with a system where I have to have more input than I currently do. I have enough to do without taking on the job of licence checking."

30%

of fleets, not already paying for one, plan to adopt a system in the next 12 months

76%

of fleets pay for a licence-checking service

There are a number of established third-party providers through DVLA's Electronic Driver Entitlement Checking Service (EDECS).

Many have joined the newly-formed trade body, Association for Driving Licence Verification (ADLV), which was launched, in part, as a response to the upcoming abolition of the paper counterpart.

Maycock, ADLV chairman, said: "There is a willingness by all the main groups involved to support the formation of a trade association that delivers a best practice approach to driving licence verification for fleets."

"ADLV addresses these needs fully and has recruited the most experienced and professional organisations in the business to deliver the service."

ADLV member organisations include Licence Check, Drivercheck, Licence Bureau, DrivingMonitor, AA DriveTech, Jaama and Interactive Driving Systems.

REAL-TIME DATA

ADLV is working closely with DVLA on a new digital service for fleet customers to check licence data in real-time.

Subject to licence holder consent, the new technology will enable ADLV members and other organisations meeting DVLA requirements who sign up to the service to perform 24/7 real-time licence checks for the first time.

The new system, which is scheduled for launch early next year, will also enable faster batch processing of licence data.

Ultimately, it is intended that the new service will replace the EDECS system.

Kevin Curtis, technical director at ADLV, says: "By working closely with DVLA on this new platform, ADLV members can deliver 24/7 real-time checking and faster batch processing for fleet users."

"This will be a major advance over the current service and, as such, the new system will redefine best practice across the sector."

As a batch service for fleets, ADLV's system will also be in contrast to DVLA's Share My Driving Record platform, a single-query service that requires each driver to register their consent every time their employer wishes to access their driver record from DVLA.

"SMDR is for individual one-at-a time enquiries," says the DVLA spokesman.

"For bulk enquiries we are developing a business-to-business interface via an Application Protocol Interface – API – that will be available as a beta version early 2015."

CONCERNS OVER DATA SECURITY

Fleet operators' association ACFO has given its seal of approval to the SMDR service, but says that database security remains an issue.

"Fleets will be able to get live data which is as accurate as DVLA holds," says John Pryor, ACFO chairman.

"But there is still confusion on how you can get access and what information is required."

"Will people be able to check without the consent of the driver?"

Using the service to check on colleagues' or employees' records may constitute a breach of privacy unless they have been given permission by the employee to carry this out.

Jim Kirkwood, managing director of AA DriveTech, says: "No-one wants to run the risk of exposing extremely sensitive and personal driver data to all-comers."

ADLV, he argues, can protect against those privacy issues. "It ensures appropriate data access governed by strict compliance and protected by effective security, in line with DVLA's data assurance standards," says Kirkwood.

"In this respect it meets the operational demands of both the fleet and insurance industries."



"Checking driving licences, whether you do it yourself or you use a third party, is a cost exercise"

Malcolm Maycock, managing director of compliance company Licence Bureau



WHY LICENCE CHECKING MATTERS

The lawfulness of an employee's licence may only be discovered after an accident



More than one in every 200 company car, van and truck drivers does not hold a valid licence to legally drive their company vehicle, according to Licence Bureau checks.

While there is no specific legislation that requires an employer to check an employee's driving licence, it is an offence if a company allows an employee to drive a vehicle for work without a valid licence.

The Health and Safety Executive's guide *Driving at Work* says employers should satisfy themselves that drivers are competent and capable, and asks the question: do you check the validity of the driving licence on recruitment and periodically?

Dave Ashford, KBC Logistics transport and compliance manager, received a visit from the police after previously checking driving licences and counterparts every six months.

One of KBC's drivers had been involved in an accident in his private car and the Essex-based haulier was subsequently notified that the driver was disqualified.

The driver's licence had been manually checked in November 2012, but Ashford was not aware he had been subsequently disqualified in March 2013. Fortunately the driver was being used on shunting duties and not driving a truck on public roads.

Ashford could have faced notable penalties for both himself and the company if the accident had happened at the wheel of a KBC truck.

Ashford says: "Even though on this occasion I had fulfilled my obligation, it was a scary prospect to think that this could have been any one of my operational drivers. It identified a flaw in my systems."

Fleets need to be sure the details provided are accurate, a licence hasn't been revoked or endorsed without the employer realising it and what limitations there may be on its use.

Licence Bureau analysed more than a quarter of a million licence checks it made during 2013 and discovered an initial failure rate of around one in 200.

Provisional licence holders accounted for the top two spots, with revoked, expired and disqualified making up the top five.

At the licence recheck stage, the potential rate of failure fall to just over one per 500 and the reasons are very different from initial checks. Drivers with expired licences are top of the list followed by disqualified drivers.

Without a licence recheck, both these issues would not have been picked up by the employer, potentially causing huge duty-of-care issues as those categories of driver aren't insured in the event of an accident.

The provisional licence issue disappears at the recheck stage as these drivers have been immediately dealt with after the initial check.

It also appears to be a growing problem. Richard Brown, managing director of Licence Check, says: "In October 2014 alone, we have seen the highest number of unlicensed, disqualified and/or revoked drivers through our service."

Advertisement feature

How will you check your drivers' licences after January 2015?

Today, the DVLA issues UK driving licences that have two parts: a photocard along with a paper counterpart that details any penalties or disqualifications.

From January 2015, the paper counterpart will no longer be issued; drivers can also legally destroy the one they currently have. This means there may be no physical documentation for you to check if the licence is clean or whether the driver has any penalties or disqualifications.

So how will you be able to validate licences? There will be two main options: self-service or a managed service.

Currently, the DVLA is setting up a website to check individual licences that will initially be free to use.

At first glance, this appears to be a simple replacement.

However, this system will require the driver to complete a comprehensive online registration process which will, if authority is granted by your employee, generate a time-limited 'token' that you, the employer, can use to

access each record. Individual registration could take 10-15 minutes.

The DVLA website is designed for individual enquiries; it won't be a 'batch enquiry' system suitable for multiple checks.

In addition, details of the licence will need to be recorded separately as information from the site cannot be downloaded.

Another approach is to use a managed service.

This approach requires the driver to sign just one document that enables any number of licence checks over a three-year period. Once signed, service providers like Intelligent Data Systems can offer a full, comprehensive service, whether you have 10 or 10,000 drivers, to validate all your licences against the DVLA database.

In addition, you can access the information at any time and run reports on everything from age of the drivers to types of endorsements. You'll also have the peace of mind that you can call someone if you have a question you need answering.

Are you ready for the big change in January?

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Contact Sam Harris-Jones on: 01423 876500
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