

Work Related Road Safety

Of the 3000 plus road fatalities each year, it is estimated that up to one third involve someone at work. This accounts for some 20 fatalities and 250 serious injuries every week. An employer's responsibility is to take all reasonable steps to manage risks to their employees on the roads as they would in the workplace. Notwithstanding Road Traffic Law requirements, Health and Safety laws apply to 'on-the-road' work activities as to all work activities, and risks should be effectively managed within a health and safety management system. By managing our employees on the roads we have the potential to reduce the frequency and severity of personal injury and vehicle/property damage incidents, resulting claims which mainly affect Motor Fleet and Employers Liability Policies.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

1. Risk Assessment is utilised to identify generic and bespoke organisational risks. Employers apply risk assessment guidance and evaluate risks set out under HSE Guidance INDG382.
2. A driving policy sets out the organisation's approach, rules and information relating to their particular hazards and relevant controls for work related road safety e.g. rest breaks including nights away, mobile phone usage, vehicle checks by user, maintenance and service requirements in accordance with manufacturers instructions, and resources provided.
3. Recruitment policies consider appropriate selection criteria, e.g. review of licence, driving ability and experience, and fitness to drive (including susceptibilities).
4. A procedure is in force to ensure Driving licences and business use insurance on private vehicles are subject to annual (minimum) check.
5. Contracts of employment allow for disciplinary action e.g. mobile phone misuse, reckless driving and non-declaration of points. Action/retraining are enforced post incident.
6. Safety performance, appropriateness/maintenance schedules of vehicle, and 'fit' to use are considered in vehicle selection process (also with employee owned vehicles for work purposes).
7. All road users are provided with suitable/relevant training, instruction and competence verified.
8. The defined requirements for Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) are implemented for company owned or hired and private vehicles considered as work equipment.

BEST PRACTISE

- There is top-level commitment to work-related road safety with responsibilities clearly defined, and supported by an integrated organisational structure allowing cooperation across departments with responsibilities for work related road safety. The business & safety benefits are communicated.
- Organisations seek to eliminate driving for relatively safer alternatives where appropriate and reasonably practicable e.g. public transport, air, video and phone conferencing.
- Performance is monitored, and objective data collected, to ensure that the policy and existing strategies are effective. Employees are encouraged to report and partake in the investigation of all work-related road incidents without fear of punitive action.
- Senior management review accident and claims data, benchmark performance, and commit to prioritised 'risk based' improvement targets, with personal ownership throughout the business.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Those who use the public highway must comply with road traffic legislation, managed by the Department for Transport. This covers aspects as diverse as requirements for vehicles to be regularly examined for road worthiness through to the adherence of speed limits. Health and Safety legislation requires employers to; take appropriate steps to ensure the health and safety of their employees and others, undertake and review risk assessments, and consider and minimise risks associated with work equipment (vehicles). This includes the time when they are driving, or riding at work, whether this is in a company or hired vehicle, or in the employee's own vehicle. Criminal charges can arise under current Health and Safety and manslaughter legislation and the Corporate Manslaughter Act 2007.

GUIDANCE & USEFUL INFORMATION

- Useful Websites: www.hse.gov.uk; www.rosipa.org; www.brake.org.
- HSE guidance: Management of Work Related Road Safety (INDG382)
- Road Traffic Act 1991 (c.40).

For further information contact RM@qbe-europe.com