

Driver Recruitment - Selection, Induction and Retention

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Introduction

This guide is intended to be used in conjunction with and complement your fleet policy documentation. Use the information to evaluate the effectiveness of your current work-related road risk policies and procedures.

Most employers recognise the fact that their workforce are their greatest assets, and the right recruitment and induction processes are vital in ensuring that any new employee becomes effective in the shortest time. Driving for work is the most dangerous activity many employees undertake.

More than a quarter of all road traffic incidents may involve someone who is driving as part of their work activities, at the time of the incident (Department for Transport figures).

Health and safety law applies to work activities on the road in the same way as it does to all other work activities. Employers need to effectively manage the risks to drivers as part of their overall health and safety arrangements. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires that employers must ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all employees whilst at work and ensure the safety of other road users.

Effective management of work-related road safety (WRRS) helps reduce risk and mitigate exposure, no matter the size of your organisation. It could also result in, for example:

- Reduced frequency of road traffic collisions
- Fewer injuries to drivers
- Reduced risk of work-related ill health
- Reduced stress and improved morale
- Retention of employees
- Improved financial performance for the business



Driver Selection

Selection policies and procedures should be established and instructed to all managers to assist in ensuring competent drivers are recruited. New employees who are likely to drive on behalf of your business, should undergo a thorough driver selection process before they are authorised to drive. Effective driver selection will involve the following:

- Completion of a full driving licence check, either directly via the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency ([DVLA](#)) or through a specialist provider (see also Aviva Loss Prevention Standard [Driver Licence Checking](#))
- Obtain and follow up references from previous employers
- Evidence obtained of the ability to work in the UK
- Establish that they are medically fit to drive; as a minimum, the completion of medical questions on a driving application form
- The applicant's eyesight should be tested to ensure that it meets the minimum standard for driving
- Assess previous driving experience and establish their accident history
- Complete a driver assessment through asking questions in relation to driving and/or via an online assessment - skills based and/or behavioural assessment. Aviva Specialist Partner [DriverMetrics](#) can provide a behavioural driver safety programme
- In respect of commercial vehicle drivers, complete a driving risk assessment by a competent employee or third party provider

All selection information should be collated by way of a driving related application form, ensuring that all sections are fully completed and endorsed by the applicant as a statement of fact. Application forms can help the recruitment process by enabling the provision of necessary and relevant information about the applicant and their skills. The form should be retained with your personnel records, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The selection process should also be used for all temporary and occasional drivers.

Driver Induction

Induction policies and procedures should be established. New employees who are likely to drive on behalf of the business should undergo a thorough induction process before they are authorised to drive.

Where new drivers are employed, time should be included within the company induction process to provide detailed instruction and guidance on the driving standards in place within your business.

Driver induction should include the following:

- Driver responsibilities
- Driving at Work Policy including mobile phone usage, recognising fatigue, reporting accidents, information on additional technology such as telematics and in-vehicle cameras
- Vehicle familiarisation including safety features such as Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) and Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS)
- Vehicle checks and fault reporting
- Vehicle maintenance and servicing schedules
- Vehicle security
- Accident reporting procedures
- Drug and Alcohol Policy, including initial screening
- Breakdown and other emergency procedures
- Training on activities pertinent to their role such as loading and unloading, delivery routes
- Drivers Handbook - following a briefing of the contents, all drivers should be issued with a personal copy of the company driver handbook and be required to sign a declaration confirming they have read and understood the contents, and will raise any concerns with their line manager
- Employees should complete questions on four or five pertinent areas of the handbook, relevant to the business. This can be determined by the current type of claims, root causes from investigations and/or areas that require attention such as the mobile phone policy, thus, raising the profile of these hazards

Additionally, in respect of commercial vehicle drivers and depending on the driver's role, induction training should be extended to include the following:

- Load distribution and restraint
- Vehicle height
- Driver's hours regulations and tachograph operation
- Daily vehicle, trailer checks and defect reporting
- Tail-lift operation
- Ancillary hydraulic operation
- Training on activities pertinent to their role such as loading and unloading, delivery routes, hazardous goods, delivery site assessments, nil defect reporting, daily vehicle checks, etc.

Induction for commercial vehicle drivers should also include a practical driving assessment by a competent person.

All induction training and driving assessment(s) should be formally evidenced and a record kept in the driver's employment file, providing evidence that the training/assessment was conducted in compliance with the employer's

policy and procedures. The employee's file should be retained for a minimum of six years after their leaving date to cover the time limit for bringing any civil legal action.

Driver Retention

Replacing members of staff incurs significant costs for employers, and on average new employees in SMEs (1-250 workers) take 24 weeks to reach optimum productivity, compared to 28 weeks for large firms with over 250 workers. If an organisation has problems retaining staff, it can experience a number of adverse impacts; for example, the financial cost of recruiting replacement staff, low staff morale, reduced productivity and loss of work.

Topics to consider in relation to driving duties that will impact upon driver retention are:

- Are work/driving schedules realistic?
- Do you allow enough time to complete journeys safely?
- Is the vehicle suitable for the activities undertaken?
- Do you consider poor weather conditions, such as snow or high winds, when planning journeys?
- Do you have a Fleet Steering committee on which all areas of the business are involved, including drivers?
- Do you ensure that driver's health and safety is not being put at risk?
- Are employees provided with clear instruction on the work required and how to keep safe on the road?
- Many employees value training and development opportunities more highly than financial reward, so consideration should be given to continued development of driving skills
- Recognition schemes can be a powerful way of motivating drivers, but employers need to promote them to ensure that they are effective and do not encourage poor driving practices
- Are systems in place to make drivers accountable for at-fault crashes by charging an excess for xx at-fault crashes in a given period? If such procedures are in place, are the factors set at the correct levels to improve behaviour and reduce additional losses?
- Health and wellbeing initiatives can be an effective way of boosting staff retention. Workplace health promotion covers the good practice activities that employers can implement to improve the health and wellbeing of driving staff

The potential benefits associated with having a driving workforce that is healthy, trained and motivated are:

- Efficient operations
- Financial savings
- Enhanced reputation of the business
- Reduced fuel costs
- Reduced wear and tear, improving whole vehicle life costs and vehicle/driver utilisation
- Avoidance of lost productivity due to sickness/accidents/injuries/collision repair costs
- Reduced accidents and motor/personal injury claims

Retention of Documentation

All recruitment, induction and training information should be formally evidenced, and a record kept in the driver's employment file, providing evidence that the processes were conducted in compliance with the employer's policy and procedures. The employee's file should be retained for a minimum of six years after their leaving date to cover the time limit for bringing any civil legal action.

Additional Information

- <https://www.hse.gov.uk/roadsafety/>
- [GOV.UK – Check if a health condition affects your driving](#)

Further risk management information can be obtained from [Aviva Risk Management Solutions](#)

Please Note

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