



## COMPILING A DRIVER SAFETY POLICY

There are many things to take into account when compiling a driver safety policy (DSP). However, there are two things that are of paramount importance. The first is that it is **your** policy. What we mean by this is don't just grab a policy thinking they are all the same. The second most important thing is that a policy is about as useful as mud flaps on a tortoise if none of your drivers know anything about it. Once complete it should be issued to all those that drive on company business.

Consider a short policy questionnaire as part of the yearly driver assessment process. When initially thinking about your DSP, there are three main subject areas to cover. These are the driver, the vehicle and the journey. You could add a fourth to this which we would call the activity as it is important to think about what the driver's activity is as part of the driver's DSP.

### **Policy Statement and Incident Reporting**

A DSP should start with a company statement along the lines of "Your company name" recognises the need to comply with current legislation and has taken all reasonable steps to ensure conformance. All staff and others working for "Your company name" should ensure policies and procedures contained within this document and other relevant information is followed. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

This statement should be followed by information including a flowchart detailing the reporting lines for all staff to report any incident (from the bottom to the top of the business). Now that the basics are out of the way, we can get on to the detail of the DSP.

### **Driver**

Over 95% of road traffic collisions are caused by driver error. Therefore it is fairly obvious that if you can control driver behaviour through effective policies and procedures, you take a massive step towards reducing risk and complying with current regulations. Policies and procedures which should be considered in relation to the driver are as follows:-

#### **Driving Licences**

Is it current?

Is it correct for the type of vehicle?

Is it regularly checked?

#### **Vehicle Insurance**

Do you insure all your vehicles or do you have 'grey fleet' vehicles where drivers use their own vehicles? If so, are they insured for business use and do you regularly check?

#### **Eyesight**

There is a minimum standard for drivers in the UK. Do your drivers know about this and how do you know they comply with the requirement. Do you carry out basic eyesight checks?



### **Working Days and Rest breaks**

This can be a bit of a minefield as there are many different regulations in the UK depending on the type of work undertaken and vehicle driven. We would recommend as a minimum drivers have an unbroken eleven hour rest period every day.

### **Working pressures**

Drivers should be reminded that driving a vehicle is likely to be the most dangerous thing that they have to do. They should not let pressures of the job increase their risk and if they feel this is the case, there should be a procedure for them to follow to reduce the risk.

### **Vehicle Loading**

More important for load carrying vehicle fleets but you should ensure that car drivers put heavier items in the boot and use adequate securing restraints.

### **Personal Safety**

Can be greatly improved if staff take reasonable steps to protect themselves both whilst driving and leaving/returning to their vehicles.

### **Journeys**

Guidelines should be given to staff to help reduce risk whilst travelling i.e. check weather conditions, take regular breaks etc.

### **Motoring Law**

This important section should cover company policy on seat belt usage, the Highway Code, alcohol and drugs, speed, mobile phone use and smoking in vehicles. Most is self explanatory and straight forward, however you do have choices, for instance do you allow drivers to make calls from a hands free mobile phone or not, and do you want to ban any alcohol in the bloodstream or insist drivers stay below the legal limit.

### **What to do in the event of a collision/incident?**

Drivers need to know what to do in the event of a crash (however minor). You need to have a procedure for dealing with parking dents or near misses to extensive damage in multi vehicle pileup with personal injury.

### **Vehicle Maintenance**

Staff need to know the law about items such as tyres and lights as well as being able to carry out basic maintenance checks. Although it is the driver's responsibility to ensure the vehicle he or she is driving is legal, there is a duty of care on the business to ensure the vehicle is kept in top condition (this also helps with residual value) and the driver has the required skills or resource to do this.

### **Driver Responsibilities**

This area covers driver temperament. You should clearly state how you want your drivers to conduct themselves whilst driving including things like road rage,

### **Eco Driving and Vehicle Choice**

Eco driving and (if they have a choice of vehicle or use their own vehicle for business) advice should be given on choosing a suitable vehicle i.e. ABS brakes, airbags, seatbelts, 4/5 door car and NCAP star rating etc.



## Appendix

This area should contain things like daily/weekly check lists, accident report forms, near miss report forms as well as important contact numbers.

The above list is not comprehensive and should include further sections if your business has any specific risks. Hopefully you now have a better understanding of requirements to ensure you reduce the risk to your drivers and show that you are taking a responsible attitude to driver safety.

---

Call us on **0115 971 3343** or visit: **[pedigreeas.co.uk](http://pedigreeas.co.uk)**

You can sign up to our Newsletter database, where you can download current and past newsletters of interest to you. We will not pass on your information to third parties!

*Disclaimer: Drivers are reminded; it is their responsibility to drive safely and within the law. Any information contained within this document is provided for general information purposes only and is not intended to provide specific advice. Pedigree Automotive Solutions offers no guarantees as to the accuracy of this information and are unable to accept any responsibility for any errors or inaccuracy.*