



# Your safe driving policy

Helping you to manage work-related road safety and keep your employees and vehicles safe on the roads.





This booklet has been developed by the NZ Transport Agency and ACC, acknowledging the support of the Department of Labour.

This booklet is available to download. Simply search 'Your safe driving policy' on ACC's or the NZTA's websites, or you can order hard copies from ACC at [www.acc.co.nz/publications](http://www.acc.co.nz/publications).

If you have further queries please contact:

ACC, PO Box 242, Wellington 6140 or phone 0800 844 657 or visit their website [www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz).

NZ Transport Agency, PO Box 2840, Wellington 6140 or phone 0800 699 000 or visit their website [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz).

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# Why have a safe driving policy?

Encouraging good driving is good business. Having a safe driving policy can protect your staff, and enhance your reputation, both within your own company and with your customers.

A safe driving policy is easy to set up and can save you money. No matter what kind of company you run, how big it is or how many vehicles you have, implementing even small safe driving initiatives can reduce injuries, save lives and save your business money.

This booklet tells you in detail why you need a safe driving policy and provides ideas that are easy to include in your safe driving policy.

## Don't be put off!

This isn't a daunting task and it's not a big document to get through. Really!

We've made it easy for you to implement a safe driving policy. This document is a summary of what you need to know and include in your own policy.

However, if you go online to [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz) or [www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz), you can search 'A simple safe driving policy' to download a safe driving policy template that you can adapt to fit your business.

## What's in it for you?

Having employees who are safe on the road means you can reduce injuries among your workers, save money and increase productivity. You can also:

- > enhance your company's reputation
- > improve workplace morale and wellbeing
- > comply with the law (particularly the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 ([www.dol.govt.nz](http://www.dol.govt.nz))) and the Land Transport Act ([www.transport.govt.nz/legislation](http://www.transport.govt.nz/legislation)). Go to these websites to read more about your responsibilities under these Acts
- > reduce your company's overall environmental impact
- > put your business on a preferred supplier list for organisations that will only contract companies with safe driving policies and/or good environmental practices.

## What exactly is a safe driving policy?

It's all about having systems and policies in place in your business that mean you:

- > buy or hire vehicles with a high safety rating
- > provide driver education to any employee who drives a vehicle for work
- > reduce the potential for driver fatigue and distraction – even among employees who use a vehicle to commute to and from work
- > reduce the number of infringement notices received, e.g. for speeding
- > reduce the risk of serious injuries if the worst happens, by promoting the use of safety belts, providing incentives to ensure safe driving and having processes in place to manage poor driving behaviour among your staff.

Ultimately, a safe driving policy is about protecting your staff and your company because, as any business person knows, both injuries and replacing a damaged vehicle are expensive.

## Why it's so important in the workplace

A safe driving policy helps you meet your obligations under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 (HSE Act).

A vehicle is considered a place of work and employees who are mobile are covered by the HSE Act. There are also specific requirements under the Land Transport Act, for example, the Chain of Responsibility requirements that you also need to manage as part of your business. These requirements mean that anyone who causes or influences a driver to exceed speed limits or maximum gross weight limits or to work outside of their work time or log book requirements can be fined. Directors can also be fined the same penalty as the company.

Work-related road safety applies to anyone who drives as part of their work, irrespective of vehicle ownership or type (including motorcycles). Although the HSE Act doesn't apply to commuting, a sad fact is a large number of fatalities and injuries happen when employees are commuting. In fact, it's estimated that work-related crashes – including commuter crashes – account for around half of all workplace deaths. Then there are the thousands more who are injured.<sup>1,2</sup>

1 Bronwen McNoe et al (2005): 'Work-related fatal traffic crashes in New Zealand 1985–1998', Journal of the New Zealand Medical Association, 118(1227).

2 Murray, W., Pratt, S., Hingston, J. & Dubens, E. (2009). Promoting Global Initiatives for Occupational Road Safety: Review of Occupational Road Safety Worldwide.

It's important that once you've created a safe driving policy you incorporate it into your business's health and safety policy and procedures and ensure all staff know about it – especially those who drive as part of their jobs.

Why not make the safe driving policy part of your company's code of conduct? Then your employees will know exactly how much importance you put on keeping safe on the roads.

## Where the savings are made

Having a safe driving policy will save you money. Consider the potential savings through:

- > lower insurance premiums
- > lower crash repair bills
- > lower maintenance costs (e.g. in tyre wear)
- > reduction in lost productivity, fewer sales missed or fewer interruptions to service
- > less sick leave and lower temporary staff costs
- > reduced payments to third parties who might be involved in a crash.

Then there are the savings that can be made on fuel bills by promoting better travel planning and more economical driving.

There's also a good chance that having a safe driving policy as part of your health and safety policy could save you money on your ACC levies too.

This could be through the:

- > ACC Workplace Safety Discount programme
- > ACC Workplace Safety Management Practices programme.

Which scheme could benefit you depends on the work you do and the size of your business. Go to [www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz), click on 'Levies and Cover', then 'How to pay less' to find out more.

# The facts

## The cost to business

A survey<sup>1</sup> of 85 New Zealand organisations taking part in a road safety workshop showed:

- >> on average they had 33 crashes or collisions per year, involving one in four work vehicles
- >> the annual cost of motor fleet insurance claims averaged \$57,915
- >> the annual hidden cost of motor fleet insurance claims (including vehicle downtime) averaged \$121,286
- >> the average number of road injuries or fatalities per year was 10.

Insurance Council of New Zealand data estimates that during 2008, New Zealand businesses claimed approximately \$400 million in insurance owing to commercial vehicle crashes.

The ACC Injury Cost Calculator can help you work out the real impact on your financial bottom line. <http://www.acc.co.nz/preventing-injuries/at-work/injury-cost-calculator/index.htm>

## Leading factors in crashes

During 2008, there were 11,647 reported crashes resulting in injury or death. The five leading factors were:

- >> failure to give way or stop (2773)
- >> a driver not seeing or looking for other road users (2349)
- >> an inattentive or diverted driver (2734)
- >> travelling too fast for the conditions (1608)
- >> an alcohol/drug-affected driver (1900).

Of course, several causes can contribute to the same crash.

<sup>1</sup> Dr Will Murray (April 2007): Improving work-related road safety in New Zealand – a research report, Department of Labour, Wellington, p 17 and 7.

# Writing your policy

## The preparation

Before you write a safe driving policy, you need to do some preparation so you can decide what to put in it.

First you need to:

- > identify the types of vehicle you use, including motorbikes, and some of their features. Are they leased or do you own them?
- > identify how your drivers use vehicles. Do they carry loads? What are their driving hours, etc?
- > identify the level of driver licensing and training. Are your drivers licensed for and trained to drive these vehicles?
- > add up how much you spend on fuel; as we will discuss later, aiming to lower your fuel costs also improves driver safety.

Then analyse your crashes, vehicle accidents, damage, personal injuries, near-hit incidents and traffic offences:

- > where and at what time of the day did these occur?
- > what were the causes and who was at fault?
- > did bad driver behaviour cause the crashes? Was there any drink-driving, speeding, fatigue, not wearing safety belts, failing to give way?
- > did driving manoeuvres cause the crashes? Could extra driver training (such as in how to move into and out of traffic safely, reversing, and how to do u-turns) have helped?

Find out how much those accidents and infringements cost you, including in:

- > traffic fines (use infringement notices to identify areas for improvement)
- > insurance excesses and premiums
- > repairs, replacements and vehicle maintenance
- > lost sales and productivity
- > sick leave, hiring casual staff to fill in for injured staff or replacing staff whose infringements led to their dismissal
- > payments to third parties.

If you don't already collect this type of information, start doing so now. Set up a system to record it and build up a comprehensive picture for your business – make someone responsible for doing this. Six to 12 months of data should give you enough to work from.

Don't forget to involve those who have a direct say in the company's transport issues, such as the fleet, health and safety, and human resources managers. Not only do you need their help to spread the word among other staff, these people can help you to compile the information you need.

## Who your policy needs to apply to

Your policy needs to apply to everyone who drives for work purposes. Take a look at these categories and decide where your employees fit. Your policy needs to apply to them all.

**General drivers:** drivers whose main jobs are not driving for the organisation but who might be required to drive from time to time.

**Commercial drivers:** professional drivers whose vehicles are operating in a licensed transport service – these drivers are subject to additional driving rules set out in legislation.

**Employees who drive but aren't 'drivers':** employees such as sales people and mobile bank workers – people who drive company or pool vehicles most working days, but driving is not their main profession.

**Drivers who drive for some of their time:** for example, trades people using vehicles to travel between jobs or office workers using pool vehicles occasionally.

**Employees who drive their own vehicle for work purposes:** Employers still have responsibility under the Health and Safety Act to ensure both the driver and their vehicle are safe when they're using their own vehicle for work, just as if they were driving a company-owned vehicle.

## How do these drivers use the vehicles?

Think about how those drivers use the vehicles, including:

- > how long do they spend driving? Do they drive on rural roads or urban roads?
- > how old are the drivers? Are their licences valid for their vehicles?

- > are they trained? Have they done driver self-management or defensive driving courses?
- > what loads, if any, are carried? (This could be anything from display stands, sales materials and suitcases to dangerous or heavy goods)
- > are their loads secured?
- > how often are passengers carried?
- > are safety belts always worn?
- > how many tickets have been received for speeding or other infringements?
- > do they use high-hazard routes?

## Setting out roles and responsibilities

You also need to think about which staff are going to be responsible for carrying out which parts of the policy. While everyone who drives is ultimately responsible for ensuring they follow the policy, others – especially management – will be responsible for specific parts of the policy.

### Making people responsible

In your policy you will need to set out the tasks for which people are responsible, such as:

- > ensuring the policy is followed and all procedures are actually implemented
- > holding staff driving records, ensuring staff are trained and licensed, and assessing their skills. Regular checks of driver licences should be made
- > buying company vehicles, licensing and servicing them, and keeping records of this
- > recording and analysing crash results, maintenance costs and driver behaviour
- > promoting the policy and measuring its success.

Then there are the responsibilities of all employees who drive. Their responsibilities are to:

- > comply with the New Zealand Road Code and all traffic laws, rules and regulations

- > comply with the safe driving policy
- > attend driver training
- > avoid aggressive road behaviour
- > advise their managers of speeding tickets, crashes and breaches of traffic regulations
- > report all injury crashes to the police within 24 hours
- > hold current driver licences for the correct classes of vehicle, and ensure that endorsements are valid
- > drive in a way that conserves fuel and not make unnecessary trips
- > notify of any near misses.

# What's in your policy?

There are several aspects to developing a safe driving policy. To make it easy for you, we've split them into two parts – the 'must haves' (the minimum your policy should include) and the 'could haves' (additions we recommend).

The 'must haves' – your company will:

- > choose vehicles with high safety ratings
- > maintain them properly
- > have procedures to deal with poor driving behaviour and remember to incorporate your safe driving policy into the company's health and safety policy, and make it a vital part of your code of conduct
- > create safer drivers through training and education, and ensure all drivers are licensed and trained to operate the vehicles they drive
- > address driver fatigue, distraction, speed, drink and drug-driving and the use of safety belts and other safety features.

The 'could haves' – your policy could also:

- > include some focus on fuel efficiency
- > use employee incentives for safe driving behaviour and procedures to deal with poor driving behaviour
- > encourage healthy eating, sleep, work and exercise habits that assist safe driving, as these can improve driver safety.

What you put in your policy should address the problems identified in your preparatory analysis. Again, don't forget to involve your staff, especially when looking at how to raise awareness of driver safety and efficiency or fatigue.

# The 'must haves'

These are aspects that are considered essential to having a robust, effective and efficient driving policy that will keep your employees safe, while saving you and your business a lot of stress and money.

Remember, these are just the recommended requirements to write up in your policy – more information that will beef up your policy follows.

## Choose vehicles with high safety ratings

The following features are recommended for new vehicle buyers:

- > **'Electronic Stability Control (ESC)'**: systems that use sensors to detect and prevent a vehicle going out of control
- > **four-star minimum ANCAP (Australasian New Car Assessment Program) crash rating**: safety ratings based on crash test results (see [www.rightcar.govt.nz](http://www.rightcar.govt.nz))
- > **head-protecting side or curtain airbags.**

## Buying, hiring or equipping company vehicles

When you buy, hire or equip a company vehicle, you should also consider:

- > choosing an easily visible colour, such as white or red
- > good rearward visibility and/or a rear-view camera
- > active safety belt reminders
- > active head restraints to reduce whiplash
- > a three-point safety belt and head restraint for the centre rear seat
- > automatic daytime running lights
- > speed warning devices
- > type of transmission. If they are doing a lot of travel in a large city, then an automatic transmission may be better
- > a cage to protect the driver from any loose loads moving forward in a sudden stop.

Fleet buyers are also advised to consider alcohol interlocks. These prevent a vehicle being started if any alcohol is detected when the driver blows into a breath-testing device.

## Maintain your company vehicles properly

Shortcuts in vehicle maintenance can cost lives. Vehicle faults were reported as a contributing factor in around 446 of all crashes during 2008. The most common faults were worn tyres, punctures, faulty brakes and insecure loads.

You could be charged by the police for any part of a vehicle that is below certificate or warrant of fitness (WOF or COF) standard (even if these are current) and fined up to \$2000 for operating an unsafe vehicle. Well maintained vehicles also save on fuel.

Your policy for vehicle maintenance should include:

- > **following the manufacturers' maintenance requirements and schedule:** don't forget about scheduling for vehicle downtime and only allow qualified personnel to service the vehicles
- > **tyre checks:** tyres are cited as a factor in more than half of fatal crashes where vehicle defects are a contributing factor, so tyre pressure and tread depth should be checked regularly (specify in your policy whose responsibility this is)
- > **safety belt checks:** look for fading, fraying, cuts and flexibility
- > **rust checks:** if on the main structural parts of any vehicle, rust can be dangerous and should be repaired immediately. Rust removed early also stops spreading and saves money
- > **exhaust system checks:** regular inspections protect occupants from carbon monoxide poisoning
- > **special equipment:** all vehicles should be fitted with a fire extinguisher, a first aid kit, a torch, a reflective vest and an emergency triangle.

Put a system in place for drivers to report vehicle faults, and make sure these are actioned and the drivers told what was done to fix the problems. You should also provide a safe, uncluttered area for vehicle servicing and parking.

# Quick tips – vehicle safety

- >> To find out which are the safest vehicles to buy or hire, see the safety performance of new vehicles from the Australasian New Car Assessment Programme (ANCAP) at [www.rightcar.govt.nz](http://www.rightcar.govt.nz) – it is strongly recommended you choose at least a four-star vehicle. See also the used-car safety ratings for older vehicles.
- >> Buy air-conditioned vehicles if your drivers will be travelling in hot and damp weather – air conditioning helps to combat fatigue and demists windows. However, be aware that it's not always the most fuel-efficient way to cool a vehicle.
- >> Buying vehicles with extra safety features, and maintaining them well, will improve their re-sale value.
- >> Vehicles that travel long distances need more frequent servicing.

## Create safer drivers through training and education

Consider who needs what level of training, such as staff who drive company or pool vehicles, inexperienced drivers, staff recently involved in accidents or offences, and those who drive their own vehicles to work.

Choose the best driving programme for your money. Courses vary from driver seminars to practical advanced driver training courses. Overseas experience suggests that companies should provide regular training sessions because one-off sessions are not enough.

Courses to consider include:

- > **your own internal courses:** regular staff meetings to discuss driving issues can help to develop and maintain a road safety culture
- > **corporate defensive driving courses:** teaching drivers to identify dangerous situations and make adjustments to avoid a crash<sup>1</sup>
- > **individually designed driving courses:** delivered by individual providers to suit specific staff needs<sup>2</sup>
- > **courses for special vehicles:** such as forklifts<sup>2</sup> and four-wheel drive vehicles<sup>2</sup>
- > **first aid courses:** these could help employees to cope if they are involved in a crash or come across one
- > **transporting dangerous goods courses**<sup>3</sup>
- > **driver assessment:** these are 40-minute driving sessions carried out by a NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) approved driving instructor, which assess a driver's hazard identification as well as search, control and traffic-observing skills. Training requirements and programmes can then be recommended.<sup>2</sup>

For more information about accredited training courses and programmes, visit [www.tranzqual.org.nz](http://www.tranzqual.org.nz) – the website for Tranzqual, the industry training organisation for transport and logistics.

1 For details on defensive driving courses visit the AA website at [www.aa.co.nz](http://www.aa.co.nz).

2 For a list of local driving instructors, refer to your Yellow Pages or visit the Institute of Driving Educators website at [www.drivinginstructor.co.nz](http://www.drivinginstructor.co.nz).

3 A list of approved course providers is available on the NZTA website at [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz).

## Licensing

It is your responsibility as an employer to ensure that any employee who drives any kind of vehicle is legally able to do so. That means they must have the right category of licence and it must be valid. i.e. it must not be suspended, expired or revoked.

There are ways you can check that your employees' licences are up to date and valid.

### Driver Check

Contact the NZTA to subscribe to Driver Check – [www.drivercheck.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.drivercheck.nzta.govt.nz) – so you can be notified if new and existing staff are licensed drivers.

Remember that vehicles driven by unlicensed drivers can be impounded by the police, so companies need to check the validity of their employees' driver licences before allowing them to drive company vehicles. Rental companies are responsible for ensuring they only rent vehicles to licensed drivers.

### TORO (Transport Organisation Register Online)

This is the NZTA service that enables transport operators (TSL or PSL holders) to maintain a register of drivers in their employment. Certain transport organisations are required by law to maintain such a register, including details about their drivers' licences, which must be available for inspection by NZTA and the New Zealand Police. TORO – [www.toro.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.toro.nzta.govt.nz) – is an online registry system that allows transport organisations to meet their legal commitments.

### Operator Rating System (ORS)

The Operator Rating System (ORS) is a new system. It aims to provide a fair and accurate indication of both the safety of an operator's fleet and the operator's compliance with land transport safety legislation.

ORS will let operators know how well they're complying with legislation, help customers find and support operators that have good safety records and allow the NZTA to target regulatory activities where they are most needed.

For more information visit <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/commercial/assistance/ors>

# Address driver behaviour

## Prohibit speeding

As a major cause of crashes, speeding must be prohibited. Not only can you save lives and serious injuries, you save on fuel consumption and cost. When a crash happens, the seriousness of any injuries is directly related to the speed the vehicles were going.

Speeding is not just about exceeding the speed limit. It can also be about driving too fast for the conditions, such as on wet or icy roads, in heavy traffic, or while cornering.

Your safe driving policy should help to lower speed by:

- > making sure staff have enough time to travel between destinations
- > making staff responsible for paying their own speeding tickets
- > making speeding a disciplinary issue
- > providing regular educational sessions on driver responsibility
- > ensuring managers communicate that meeting deadlines is not an excuse for speeding.

## Prohibit drink-driving and other drugs

Driving under the influence of drink, drugs or medication that affects driving ability must be prohibited. To help cut such driving:

- > be a responsible host and provide food and non-alcoholic drinks at functions
- > provide courtesy vans from work functions
- > encourage the use of taxis and designated drivers
- > provide regular educational sessions on driver responsibility
- > inform staff that they must notify you if they are taking any medication that could cause drowsiness or impair their driving in anyway
- > consider implementing an alcohol and/or other drug testing policy.

## Address driver distraction

Driving is a complicated task requiring continuous concentration. Overseas studies have shown that anything that diverts a driver's attention for more than a second can significantly increase the likelihood of a crash, near-crash or incident.

In 2009 it became illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone when driving. Using a mobile phone to make, receive or end a call when driving is now only legal if:

- > the driver does not have to hold or manipulate the phone to do so (i.e. the phone is completely voice activated); or
- > the mobile phone is securely mounted to the vehicle and the driver manipulates the phone infrequently and briefly.

Drivers are not allowed to create, send or read text messages under any circumstances.

It's recommended that drivers minimise the potential for distraction by switching phones off while driving. Where staff need to stay in contact on the road, they should pull over in a safe and legal place before returning a call.

To minimise distraction while driving, your policy should encourage staff to:

- > switch off mobile phones when driving (research shows that talking on even a hands-free phone significantly decreases a driver's performance)
- > ask passengers to be quiet if the driver is having difficulty concentrating
- > ensure windscreens and mirrors are clean, and adjust in-vehicle controls (including the radio/stereo) before setting off
- > if unfamiliar with the route, check on a map before commencing a journey (or pull over when checking routes)
- > ensure that goods carried are properly secured (see the NZTA's Guide to Safe Loading and Towing for Light Vehicles <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/glovebox-guide-safe-loading-towing>. For heavy vehicles refer to the official road code for heavy vehicles <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/roadcode/heavy-vehicle-road-code/index.html>)
- > take regular breaks rather than eating, drinking or smoking while driving.

**A note about smoking:** While the Smoke-free Environments Act 1990 allows smoking in a work vehicle if everyone using that vehicle gives written consent, to protect the health and safety of your staff it is recommended that all work vehicles be smoke-free and that smoking while driving be prohibited.

## Address driver fatigue

Fatigue is more than tiredness – it is weariness or exhaustion. Unfortunately, fatigue can impair driving long before you 'nod off' at the wheel. People who drive for work travel about three times the distance of the average private motorist and often work long hours, so they have a higher risk of becoming fatigued.

However fatigue also has the potential to affect all staff, whether they drive as part of their jobs or simply drive to and from work.

The most common effects of fatigue on driving are:

- > difficulty keeping your vehicle within the correct lane
- > heavy or sore eyes and frequent or slow blinking
- > frequent yawning
- > having to take sudden corrective actions because of a lack of concentration
- > unintentionally speeding up or slowing down, so you find yourself making unnecessary changes in speed
- > daydreaming and/or realising you don't remember the last stretch of road you drove over
- > not reacting in time or appropriately to avoid a dangerous situation.

Fatigue can affect your performance at any time – when you are fatigued:

- > it takes longer to understand what is happening around you, at work or on the road
- > your reactions are slower and your ability to concentrate is reduced
- > your judgement of risk is reduced
- > you are more likely to succumb to discomfort, pain and injury conditions, such as strains and other aches and pains, and are more likely to have a slip, trip or fall.

Under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992, employers are responsible for ensuring the workplace is safe. This includes having systems to assess and control the contributors to fatigue, particularly when employees use machines or vehicles at work.

## Transport service drivers

A transport service driver is anyone who drives a vehicle in a licensed transport service, or drives a vehicle for hire or reward. Examples are courier drivers, taxi drivers, bus drivers and truck drivers.

For these drivers, all the hours spent working – which might or might not include driving – are counted as work time.

If you employ these drivers, you have a legal responsibility to ensure they comply with the requirements, including making a record of work and rest time in their logbooks if they are required to maintain one.

### Work time limits for transport service drivers

- > In general, drivers must take a break of at least 30 minutes after 5.5 hours of work time, no matter what type of work takes place during that period (so even if they're not driving).
- > Drivers can work a maximum of 13 hours in any 24-hour period. They must then take a break of at least 10 hours, as well as the standard half-hour breaks required every 5.5 hours.
- > Drivers can accumulate work time of up to 70 hours before they must take a break of at least 24 hours.
- > While not a legal requirement, it is recommended that driving between midnight and 6am be kept to a minimum because this is the body's natural time for sleep. Many people also experience low energy late in the afternoon.

See the NZTA's website for information on work time and log book requirements: [www.nzta.govt.nz/commercial/assistance/safe-efficient/requirements.html](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/commercial/assistance/safe-efficient/requirements.html).

Remember, even if a driver is within the maximum work time hours, they can still be fatigued. Compliance with the work time rules might not be a defence. It's your responsibility to schedule their work so they have time for rest breaks and recovery. The HSE Act also sets out similar responsibilities for employers.

To manage fatigue, you need to consider what's happening for your employees both at work and at home. Use strategies (such as work and time management along with encouraging healthy living and eating) in combination, and customise them to suit individuals and situations. Fatigue can only be managed effectively if you and your staff work together.

## Other drivers

Even if your staff are not constantly driving, their risk of driver fatigue could be high if:

- > they are not getting adequate good-quality sleep
- > they work shifts or extended hours
- > their work is monotonous
- > family or personal circumstances are creating stress
- > commuting – especially for longer distances or at high risk fatigue times.

Raising awareness of these risk factors and how to reduce them will have benefits for you and your staff. If employees have to make long-distance trips, do not expect them to drive to the limits set for commercial drivers. Ten-minute breaks every two hours are advised, as well as a good sleep the night before a long trip. Again, driving between midnight and 6am is not recommended.

Drivers should know:

- > about time management: how to plan their trip and allow plenty of time
- > about getting plenty of sleep before a long journey
- > that caffeine, loud music and opening the windows are not solutions to feeling weary
- > the benefits of taking a short nap of around 20 minutes
- > about stopping driving immediately if they're sleepy
- > about eating sensibly during a long journey, which means staying away from high-fat, high-sugar foods (refer to the 'commercial drivers' section at [www.shiftwork.co.nz](http://www.shiftwork.co.nz))
- > about, if possible, sharing the driving.

Managers should:

- > plan meetings or events to start later and end earlier to accommodate staff travelling long distances to attend
- > consider offering an overnight stay if meeting times can't be adjusted for safety
- > reorganise work that's done during the low-energy times of the day
- > encourage the use of taxis or arrange transport if fatigue has been identified as a risk.

# Quick tips – fatigue

- >> The only cure for fatigue is quality sleep; not caffeine, winding the window down or turning up the music. Considering both the home and work environments is important because there might be out of-work factors making your staff fatigued.
- >> When recording incident, crash and near-miss data, also record the time of day to see if it could be linked to fatigue.
- >> Find ways to rotate work and vary tasks to minimise fatigue – make sure staff don't do too much overtime.
- >> Consider the provision of rest facilities, nutritious food and access to drinking water.

## Promote the use of safety belts and other safety features

Wearing a safety belt increases the chances of surviving a crash by 40%. Front and rear safety belts must be used at all times – it's the law. The fine for not wearing a safety belt is \$150.

To ensure safety belt wearing:

- > do not pay fines on behalf of staff
- > offer incentives to increase safety belt wearing
- > hold educational sessions on driver responsibility and risk.

Safety belts are part of Warrant of Fitness (WOF) and certificate of fitness (COF) checks. A damaged or worn safety belt can break or stretch in a crash or even in sudden stops. Safety belts can be affected by:

- > deterioration from ultraviolet light (sunlight)
- > fraying from rubbing on fittings
- > cuts or holes in the fabric
- > changes in flexibility or suppleness.

In 2009, 73 people who were not wearing safety belts were killed in crashes. At least 26 of those lives would have been saved if they had worn the belts available.

## Hiring and disciplinary procedures

These can be linked to your safe driving policy. For example:

- > seek permission from potential employees to check their licence status through Driver Check (see page 18) or Transport Organisation Register Online (TORO) ([www.nzta.govt.nz/commercial/assistance/toro.html](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/commercial/assistance/toro.html))
- > undertake disciplinary action (including potential dismissal) when procedures aren't followed
- > include driving behaviour requirements in the company's code of conduct
- > make sure employees have the correct licence class/endorsement for the type of vehicle they'll be driving
- > consider a small test for employees to ensure they can perform basic manoeuvres, for example parallel parking and reversing.

# The facts

During 2008:

- >> drivers being affected by alcohol or drugs was a contributing factor in 103 fatal traffic crashes, 441 serious injury crashes and 1156 minor injury crashes, which equates to 31% of fatal crashes and 14% of injury crashes. These crashes resulted in 119 deaths, 582 serious injuries and 1726 minor injuries. The total social cost of crashes involving alcohol or drugs was about \$841 million
- >> speeding was a contributing factor in 111 fatal crashes, 415 serious injury crashes and 1311 minor injury crashes, which equates to 34% of all fatal crashes and 15% of all injury crashes. These crashes resulted in 127 deaths, 569 serious injuries and 2060 minor injuries. The total social cost of crashes involving drivers speeding was about \$875 million
- >> diverted attention was identified as a contributing factor in a total of 1438 crashes (12% of all crashes), of which 41 were fatal crashes, 207 were serious injury crashes and 1190 were minor injury crashes. These crashes resulted in 42 deaths, 245 serious injuries and 1636 minor injuries. The total social cost of crashes involving diverted attention was about \$413 million.

## What to do if employees use their own vehicles for driving for work<sup>1</sup>

Employers owe the same duty of care under health and safety law to staff who drive their own vehicles for work as they do to employees who drive company-owned, leased or hired vehicles.

Here are some practical things you can do to manage this properly:

- > **consult staff:** make sure they are fully aware of the company's safe driving policy and that this also applies to them when they use their own vehicles

<sup>1</sup> The content for this section has been drawn from The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents: [www.rosipa.com/roadsafety/info/ownvehicle.pdf](http://www.rosipa.com/roadsafety/info/ownvehicle.pdf)

- > **set specific boundaries around own-vehicle use:** consider specifying a maximum distance for which an employee can use their own vehicle, after which a company-owned or hire vehicle should be used. This also makes financial sense if staff are reimbursed for the distance travelled – usually a company-owned or hire vehicle is cheaper.

To ensure minimum vehicle standards are met in employees' own vehicles, consider:

- > **crashworthiness and minimum safety features:** you might agree that things such as restraints, airbags, ABS and ESC are minimum safety features an employee needs in their vehicle before it can be used for work. Vehicle crashworthiness information can be found at [www.rightcar.govt.nz](http://www.rightcar.govt.nz)
- > **agree minimum conditions of use.**

'Minimum conditions of use' might mean that an employee using their own vehicle for work must:

- > ensure the vehicle is properly registered, has a valid WOF and valid insurance for business use (and is only used in accordance with that cover) and is properly serviced according to the manufacturer's recommendations
- > show, on request (and at specified intervals) documentary proof of the above
- > agree to conduct regular vehicle safety checks (see below)
- > not carry loads for which the vehicle is unsuited (such as treat their car like a van)
- > not carry hazardous materials
- > only carry the number of passengers for whom there are safety belts
- > not use the vehicle in conditions for which it was not designed (e.g. off-road).

Ensure your employee – and their manager – clearly understand they are responsible for checking these details and carrying them out. If the vehicle is found to be unsafe, stipulate it can't be used for work until it's fixed.

Also, make sure the employee knows that even though they are driving their own vehicle, they are on company business and must comply with your company's rules and procedures.

# The 'could haves'

This section has additional material that will make your safe driving policy even more wide ranging and thorough.

Before you include any of these suggestions in your policy, it's a good idea to consult an employment lawyer to check them against the Employment Relations Act 2000 and your employees' contracts, as they might require specific agreements to be written into contracts.

## Fuel efficiency

There might not seem to be an obvious link between fuel efficiency and safe driving, but overseas studies have shown that there is a direct, positive link between fuel-efficient driving and crash reduction.

Other benefits can include:

- > lower fuel costs
- > lower environmental impacts
- > enhancing your company's reputation, with your employees and the public.

Some ways to improve your fleet's environmental performance are:

- > consider fuel efficiency and size of vehicle when purchasing/leasing vehicles – if your employees mostly take short trips, you're better off including some smaller, more economical vehicles in your fleet
- > if many trips are to the same destination, think about introducing a vehicle pooling system – keep a vehicle booking record in a place where staff can easily see if there is a ride available
- > encourage staff to reduce vehicle use by combining meetings and other activities in one trip
- > ensure vehicles are regularly and well maintained – vehicles that are well tuned are more fuel efficient and less polluting, while driving on poorly inflated tyres uses more fuel
- > consider if it is even necessary to take the vehicle. Could other transport be more appropriate? Or could meetings be held via video or phone conferencing?
- > consider how your staff get to and from work – is there a way to encourage more active travel like walking or cycling?

Educate staff on fuel-efficient driving habits – this can be built into an existing driver education programme. For example:

- > faster driving burns more fuel – driving over the speed limit on the open road can increase fuel costs by up to 10%. It also increases wear and tear on vehicles, as well as driver stress
- > if a vehicle is stationary for more than 30 seconds, it is more efficient to switch off the engine than let it idle
- > short trips are less efficient – a cold engine uses 20% more fuel than a warm one
- > vehicles' air conditioners can use about 10% extra fuel, so at speeds of less than 80 kilometres per hour, opening windows might be a more cost-efficient way of cooling the vehicle.

See [www.fuelsaver.govt.nz](http://www.fuelsaver.govt.nz) for more information on how to reduce fuel consumption and how different vehicles perform. If you want more information on setting up a workplace travel plan to encourage staff to travel to and from work by public transport, on foot, by bike or by vehicle share, go to [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz).

## The facts – fuel efficiency

A study of New Zealand's road freight and transport sector reported that changes in driver behaviour alone could reduce fuel consumption by 35%. Further savings were possible through better maintenance and other measures.<sup>1</sup>

Saving fuel can also improve road safety. An Australian study found that the fuel consumption of vehicles involved in crashes was higher than that of vehicles not involved in crashes. It found that speed reduction and smooth driving gave both safety and fuel-economy benefits.<sup>2</sup>

1 P Baas and D Latto (2005): Heavy vehicle efficiency prepared for the Energy Efficiency Conservation Authority; Transport Engineering Research Ltd, Auckland, p iv.

2 N Haworth and M Symmons (2001): The relationship between fuel economy and safety outcomes: Monash University Accident Research Centre, Melbourne, Australia, p 56.

# SAFED NZ

The Ministry of Transport and the NZ Transport Agency have launched Safe and Fuel Efficient Driving New Zealand (SAFED NZ) – a driver development course for truck, bus and coach drivers. The course helps organisations reduce fuel and maintenance costs, reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and improve safety.

The New Zealand programme has been adapted from a successful scheme in the UK, which has been offered on a commercial basis for over six years, and has trained more than 20,000 drivers. SAFED can achieve real benefits in terms of safer driving and fuel efficiency, meaning fewer injuries and fatalities on roads, less accident damage to vehicles, fewer unproductive hours for vehicle repair, the potential for reduced insurance premiums and lower costs for businesses.

To find out more about SAFED NZ, or to find your nearest instructor, visit [www.safednz.govt.nz](http://www.safednz.govt.nz).

## Incentives/Disincentives/Rewards

In many situations, safe driving comes down to attitude. You can provide safer vehicles, give your drivers practical and technical skills, and set up systems to reduce fatigue. But at the end of the day, your employees must have the right attitude to driving.

Improving and celebrating employees' attitude towards safer driving can be done through using rewards and incentives.

Some ideas include:

- > rewards, such as prizes for a given number of years with no at-fault crashes (tell staff what the reward will be so they have something to aim for)
- > penalty points for breaches of the policy
- > a driver profile system (for example, 1–4 points = friendly reminder; 5–10 points = written warning; 11 or more points = risk losing vehicle and/or must pay for an advanced training course themselves; additional breaches of policy = risk losing their job)
- > setting up a bonus scheme to reward safe and efficient driving
- > setting up a pool of money that is added to each month if there are no at-fault crashes – the amount accumulates and is used to fund an end-of-year staff function or reward
- > putting results in a public area in the workplace, such as a notice board or intranet
- > encourage health checks for employees to ensure they are fit for the road
- > making driver training count towards career development.

## Personal health education

Safe driving is affected by the overall health of staff. If they're coming to work tired and worn out, their driving will be affected. Your safe driving policy could look at personal health education in the areas of:

- > stress and sleep
- > healthy breakfasts and eating
- > exercise
- > reorganising work that's done during the low-energy times of the day
- > workload and hours worked.

Encourage your staff to keep a healthy lifestyle. Consider offering tips and resources to help them improve their diet and exercise habits – not only will this make them safer drivers, it will also improve their work abilities.

As an employer, you can also take a look at your shift and work schedules to see if there's a better way that work can be organised to avoid the chances of your workers becoming fatigued.

# Next steps

Once you've created your policy, you need to make sure that your internal audience (your staff) knows about it, but it's also good to consider whether this is something you should tell your external audience (your customers and business contacts) about too.

## Getting the message across

To successfully implement a safe driving policy, all staff need to know exactly what is expected of them.

Think about the key messages you want to get across. Then communicate them using clear, concise language.

Repeat these messages in as many places as possible – staff meetings, inductions, newsletters, management meetings, notice boards, intranet, email, etc.

### Sample key messages:

- > CUT OUT CRASHES – follow the new safe driving policy
- > SLEEP IS THE ONLY CURE FOR FATIGUE
- > LEARN TO DRIVE – again
- > BE SMOOTH – drive to save fuel
- > LET'S GET TOGETHER – vehicle pool and cut down vehicle trips.

### Promotional ideas

- > Put the policy in all staff induction packs.
- > Include a regular feature in staff newsletters.
- > Feature a safe driver of the month.
- > Keep crash reports and promote internally and externally the savings in injuries/crashes and costs to the organisation.
- > Produce stickers with key messages.
- > Offer a workplace challenge that involves a central social fund – a certain amount can be added when departments achieve a clean slate at the end of each month or quarter.

- > Enhance your reputation externally by advertising the fact that you have a safe driving policy at every opportunity – some customers will select who they do business with on whether they drive in a manner that's safe for other drivers and safe for the environment.

## Measuring your policy's success

You also need to consider how the success of your new policy will be measured. A good way to do this is by recording any increase or decrease in:

- > the number of crashes involving company vehicles
- > the number of at-fault crashes involving company vehicles
- > fuel consumption
- > the number of traffic infringements received
- > the cost of repairs and maintenance
- > other financial costs associated with vehicle use
- > the average cost of workers' vehicle-related compensation claims.

You can then use these figures to analyse how well your new policy is working and what improvements need to be made.

It's a good idea to organise an annual review and link the results to the performance of your managers' or organisation's objectives.

# Quick tips

## Recording crashes

- >> When recording crashes, look at the cause of the crashes without apportioning blame. You want to determine whether any issues need addressing in the company, such as are work schedules unrealistic? Are staff overworked? Are there disincentives if staff are late?
- >> Set up a register to record the number of crashes/incidents involving your company's vehicles. The register should show the crash incidence per 10,000 kilometres driven (or similar) and the cost of repairs and vehicle replacements per 100,000 vehicle kilometres over a period.

## Case study

# Fighting fatigue on campus

After Massey University opened its Wellington campus, the size of its fleet and the amount of staff travel increased dramatically.

So, unfortunately, did the rate of driving-related incidents, and analysis showed there were particular issues with driver fatigue. In 2004, the University introduced its safe driving policy, a major part of which was aimed at alerting staff to the dangers of fatigue.

Staff must now take steps to avoid fatigue if they will be off campus or in transit for 11 hours or more, or if they will be driving for more than five hours in a working day.

These steps include:

- > taking breaks of at least 10 minutes every two hours
- > staying overnight, taking the train or sharing the driving with a colleague rather than driving between Wellington and Palmerston North on top of a full day's work.

The policy has been publicised widely through campus newsletters and health and safety committees. It's now a management responsibility to ensure that employees are not being put at risk with expectations of a long day with time on the road. This message is reinforced by fleet managers when the University's vehicles are taken out.

The University has also introduced defensive driving courses. Any employee who gets a speeding ticket or is involved in an incident – anything even as minor as a dent – is expected to attend one of these courses.

## Case study

# Driver training pays off for transport company

When Lower Hutt-based transport firm LG Anderson introduced driver safety training in 2000, it met a less-than-enthusiastic response.

Many staff had been in the business for years and didn't want to be told how to do their jobs better. Managers realised they needed more than a 'tick-box' approach to get buy-in from staff. They stressed their main motivation was the drivers' welfare – that their main concern was to ensure the drivers got home safely to their families at the end of the day. To earn the drivers' trust and credibility, "it wasn't enough to just say it – we had to show we really meant it," one manager, Craig, says.

Consulting and involving drivers is key. The onus is on staff to report safety issues, and they are encouraged to give feedback and spearhead improvements. However, management follow-through is essential, in that good ideas from staff must be picked up and acted on quickly. Also, any faults or hazards the drivers point out must be fixed promptly. As one example, an employee noted that keeping toolboxes permanently on larger trucks' trailers would mean drivers wouldn't have to carry tools along slippery connecting rails in the rain. The change was made and is now standard practice.

New staff go through a strict induction process, including driver awareness training, then ongoing training, both theory and practical. Also, periodically all drivers get a full in-cab assessment with a focus on assisting and learning, rather than examining them.

The turnaround in attitudes has been marked. The number of complaints from private motorists – common in the transport industry – has dropped from several per week to fewer than one per month. Recent driver safety training held on a Saturday morning got full attendance and "no grumpy comments", says Craig.

He has also noticed that seven years or so ago, 80% of the new ACC claims would be back injuries, but in the past four years there have only been a couple. While some of this is due to modern technologies, a good portion of the credit has to go to the drivers being educated in health and safety.

Building a positive safety culture has been the focus of health and safety at Anderson's. "It's not about a paper trail, but about having staff on board with the vision," says Craig. "I dread having a critical accident and losing a staff member, so everything we do towards health and safety will reduce the chance of that happening."

At Anderson's, this dedication to health and safety starts with the interview process and looking for a compatible health and safety attitude in the new drivers it hires. However, as in any workplace, Craig says "complacency is an issue" so regular reminders are required, but that gives him the opportunity to get across new and helpful information or approaches.

## Case study

# Fuel efficiency focus at Fulton Hogan

Fuel efficiency and environmental performance are a major focus at Fulton Hogan Bay of Plenty.

Nationally, Fulton Hogan uses more than 1.2 million litres of fuel per month, accounting for 15% of its operational costs. Rising fuel prices prompted the company to set up the Smart Drive programme to reduce maintenance, save fuel and protect the environment. Posters at work sites around the country emphasise key fuel facts – for example, that efficient driving can reduce fuel use by 10–30%, and that an hour of idling generates the same engine wear as 190 kilometres of highway travel.

Overcoming some of the entrenched myths about idling has been one of the biggest hurdles, with many drivers wrongly believing it's better for diesel engines to let them idle, rather than turning them off.

The Bay of Plenty branch has taken the environmental focus a step further by joining GreenFleet, run by the Sustainable Business Network. The branch has undertaken a staff awareness programme that included a training day with an exercise involving a trip to the supermarket, revealing marked differences in time, distance and fuel consumption. This helped highlight the importance of good travel planning and the impact of driver behaviour on fuel use.

With recent advances in its data management, Fulton Hogan Bay of Plenty hopes to introduce an incentive scheme to reward improvements in fuel efficiency. It has also taken part in the GreenFleet tree planting scheme, with more than 300 native trees planted in the region to offset its transport-related carbon emissions.

## Case study

# ACC develops internal safe driving guidelines

ACC is reaping the benefits of new driver guidelines, developed with the help of this guidebook, current best practice and the buy-in of its staff.

Previously the organisation's safe driving policy came in the form of a 'Motor Vehicle Policy' developed and managed through its procurement team, but it wasn't enough. While it touched on aspects of vehicle usage, what to do following an accident and who paid for speeding infringements, it didn't give staff and managers clear guidelines on what 'safe driving' was. It also didn't ensure that all staff who used vehicles for work were protected from the hazards they faced while driving or operating the vehicles.

Working together, ACC's Contract Manager from procurement, its Programme Manager for Public Safety and the ACC Safety and Wellbeing Manager reviewed the organisation's current Motor Vehicle Policy. They then went over 'Your Safe Driving Policy', developed by ACC and the NZTA, and looked at current best practice in order to both review and update ACC's internal Motor Vehicle Policy, particularly ensuring it included safety and wellbeing elements. The team also used the process to develop an internal document on safe driving, which became known as 'The Safe Driving Guidelines'.

These Guidelines outlined alcohol and drug use restrictions, changes to rules and practices around mobile phone use and what internal processes would occur if an employee got a ticket or committed a driving offence. The new Motor Vehicle Policy and Safe Driving Guidelines were sent to all managers, with all drivers or users of ACC vehicles required to read both documents and sign Employee Declarations. These Declarations were then kept on site as proof that the employees had reviewed and accepted ACC's Policy and processes for using vehicles for work.

ACC says it will review the new Policy and Guidelines annually, and any trends and changes in internal processes or external legislation will be incorporated into them.

The organisation says it's very pleased that using a project team with diverse skills – from procurement, internal safety and wellbeing, as well as external expertise on best practice – it has been able to develop exemplary guidelines that will protect its staff and its business.

## Case study

# Road safety pack proves handy

Road safety-focused thinking by New Zealand Steel paid off by saving injuries and earning the company invaluable public goodwill when an employee was able to help out at a late-night road accident.

New Zealand Steel-related vehicles make up a large proportion of traffic in the rural Franklin district where its plant is based. In recognition of this, the company has brought a community focus to its safe driving code of practice. It runs driver education campaigns on a range of topics, including fatigue, and educates staff about road regulations and conditions in the surrounding area. It also maintains regular dialogue with the local council on roading and safety issues.

Luckily for a group of motorists, in 2006 the company's driver safety promotion included giving all staff a Christmas take-home road safety pack, with items including a torch, jumper leads and a reflective triangle for emergencies.

Early in the following January, the pack came in handy for one employee who came across a three-car accident late at night. After he helped the occupants to safety, another minor crash happened because the accident wasn't visible to other drivers. Using a hi-viz arm band and torch from his pack, he alerted other vehicles, almost certainly preventing further crashes before emergency services arrived. Because of his quick thinking and his well equipped vehicle, all those involved received only minor injuries.

New Zealand Steel received positive coverage in local press when the media picked up on the story. Also, by publicising its employee's quick actions internally, it helped to highlight and reinforce further the safety message to staff.

# What to do now?

Now you've read this document, it's time to write your own safe driving policy.

You can either use the information in this booklet to compile your own, or go to [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz) or [www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz) and download a safe driving policy template.

We've tried to make it easy for you, so this template can be saved to your computer and adapted to fit your own business.

Once you've got your policy up and running, let the NZTA and ACC know how your safe driving policy is working for your company and what savings/ investments have been made. Our contact details are in the front of this guide.

## Other useful websites

**For advice on setting up a workplace travel plan:** see the guide at [www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/sustainable-transport/workplace-travel-plan](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/sustainable-transport/workplace-travel-plan).

**For information on fuel efficiency:** see [www.fuelsaver.govt.nz](http://www.fuelsaver.govt.nz).

**For guidance on selecting safer vehicles:** see the ANCAP crash test ratings and/or used-car safety ratings at [www.nzta.govt.nz/vehicles/choosing](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/vehicles/choosing).

**Department of Labour:** see the guide to the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 at [www.dol.govt.nz](http://www.dol.govt.nz).

**ACC:** for more resources to help prevent injuries both in and out of the workplace see [www.acc.co.nz/preventing-injuries](http://www.acc.co.nz/preventing-injuries).

As we said in the beginning – this isn't a big task, so don't be put off. Even small changes in how your employees drive and the fleet you use will undoubtedly save you money, in lost-work-time injuries, vehicle repairs, insurance premiums, fuel and much more.



