

*“As I was giving ‘last minute’ instructions to my sales executive on their car phone, a minor collision occurred, causing a long delay. The client got fed up waiting and we lost a very big contract!”*

The law treats vehicles as places of work and items of work equipment, and employers have a duty to protect employees who travel as part of their work. Around a third of all accidents on the road involve people at work. Travelling at work can include:

- internal transport
- journeys to and from the workplace
- business trips during work time
- overseas travel.

Hazards associated with overseas travel include:

- political unrest
- endemic diseases
- unfamiliar laws and customs
- natural disasters
- climate extremes
- dangerous or poisonous animals, snakes and so on.

Your work-related travel and road risks should be the subject of specific risk assessments, which should aim to:

- identify driving or travelling-related hazards
- assess which of the hazards give rise to significant risks
- develop control measures to protect the driver, traveller, public and vehicle.

## Tips

Introduce the Highway Code to the workplace. This may involve:

- driver training, authorisation and licensing
- fitness-to-drive medicals
- one-way systems
- speed limits
- installing mirrors and pedestrian crossings
- keeping vehicles and pedestrians apart
- installing reversing alarms on vehicles
- carrying out visibility checks and regular preventive vehicle maintenance.

Introduce a good vehicle selection policy, for example purchase vehicles with good safety features, such as rollover protection; collision protection; ergonomically designed instrument layouts; seats offering good lumbar support; quiet vehicles.

Develop safe driver programmes, including:

- driver selection and training
- defensive driving; vehicle familiarisation
- forward planning of routes and journey patterns
- an “Is my journey really necessary?” philosophy (using alternatives such as videoconferencing)
- safe driving procedures – realistic journey times, rest breaks; drivers’ licence monitoring; no eating, drinking, reading, phoning or smoking at the wheel; no blame culture for vehicle or road accident reporting/investigations; “How’s my driving?” reporting schemes; good driver awards; and drivers’ handbook.
- Make sure that all your vehicles are serviced and maintained in accordance with manufacturers’ guidance.
- Provide information packs for employees who drive or travel overseas.

## Useful links

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents  
[www.rospa.com/drivertraining/index.htm](http://www.rospa.com/drivertraining/index.htm)

Institute of Advanced Motorists  
[www.iam.org.uk](http://www.iam.org.uk)

IOSH free publication “Safety in the global village”  
[www.iosh.co.uk/files/technical/Safety%20in%20the%20global%20village%2Epdf](http://www.iosh.co.uk/files/technical/Safety%20in%20the%20global%20village%2Epdf)

Health and Safety Executive – Workplace transport  
[www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/index.htm)