



Working together to eliminate road death and serious injuries

## Bringing you important news for business drivers ~ August 2008

### CPC is 'A'OK

DriveTech has been approved by the Joint Approvals Unit for Periodic Training (JAUPT) and is now able to deliver Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) training.

On September 10th this year the new Driver CPC rules will come into effect for buses and coaches, with the LGV equivalent following on 10th September 2009. The Driver CPC will validate the vocational licence and, without it, drivers cannot legally drive their vehicle.



This means all professional PCV or LGV drivers, or a company that operates these vehicles, will need to prepare for the forthcoming changes to the licencing requirements. Essentially, this change will require all professional bus, coach and lorry drivers to complete 35 hours of Driver CPC training every FIVE years in a minimum of seven hour blocks. The seven hour blocks do not include breaks. Upon completion of the 35 hours within the five year period, a driver will receive a Driver Qualification Card, which will validate their Driving Licence.

DriveTech has created a dedicated company division – DriveTech DriverCPC - to manage this specialised area of training and put an acknowledged expert in charge, so if you would like more details, please contact Colin Edwards on [colin.edwards@drivetech.co.uk](mailto:colin.edwards@drivetech.co.uk) or call him on 07525 703352.

### Rockingham link up

DriveTech is pleased to be able to announce that it had formed a commercial relationship with Rockingham race circuit, which has recently extended its range of non-race, driver training facilities.



We now have at our disposal a world class facility with a wide range of off-road driver training activities, which allows the creation of exciting and rewarding driving events. With the added attraction of a number of different combinations of meeting rooms and corporate hospitality units on site, Rockingham is the ideal place for a product launch, sales meeting, incentive or reward day or simply corporate hospitality, maybe with a bit of driver education thrown in, for your own clients.

DriveTech and Rockingham in partnership can offer a turnkey operation for our customers so to discuss possible ideas or for further information please contact FleetSafe Account Development Manager, Kelly Robertson, on 01344 467886 or email her at [fleetsafe@drivetech.co.uk](mailto:fleetsafe@drivetech.co.uk)

### Learning the DriveTech way

July saw DriveTech entering the learner driver market for the first time, with its innovative 'Advantage' brand. Although coverage during the pilot period is restricted to selected areas of the Home Counties, DriveTech is looking to roll out the brand on a nationwide basis over the coming months.

DriveTech Advantage is different from average learner driving instruction in several ways:

- We only use Grade 5 or 6 trainers who are on the DSA Fleet Register and who have attained their RoSPA Gold qualification (did you know that many learner instructors are only trainees but are quite legitimately charging for hourly learner driving lessons?)
- We include a series of workshops to give novice drivers the edge and compensate for their lack of experience. These cover such topics as dealing with passenger peer pressure; drink, drugs and fatigue effects; speed management; coping with difficult weather conditions; journey planning and vital mechanical checks.
- We provide post test training on the use of motorways, night driving and special techniques to remain safe in high risk situations such as de-restricted single lane rural roads.
- There is a post course participative driving event which not only celebrates success but also provides further driving education.



We're hoping that DriveTech Advantage becomes the blueprint for the future of learner driving and turns out a new breed of responsible, highly capable young drivers that will set an example for a whole generation. Maybe then we can stem the tide of young driver casualties once and for all.

If you have a requirement for learner driving within your organisation and would like to find out how DriveTech can help, please contact Steve Fothergill, Head of Advantage, on 01344 467734 or on [steve.fothergill@drivetech.co.uk](mailto:steve.fothergill@drivetech.co.uk)

### Brain power

Maintaining concentration and sound judgment are essential when aiming for an incident-free drive but it all too easy to forget about the potential effects of dehydration, particularly as there hasn't been much evidence of serious summer weather this year yet. In fact, paradoxically, car air conditioning systems, whilst good at maintaining a comfortable temperature, can sometimes accelerate the dehydration process.



It's vital to maintain good fluid levels, particularly on a long journey, so it's prudent to take two hourly 'refreshment' breaks both to relax and rehydrate. Also, it's still a good idea to have some form of drink, preferably one that won't deteriorate, in the car at all times. You don't have to resort to isotonic or energy drinks. Good old water will do,

providing it isn't too warm.

If you feed the brain it will stay pin sharp and ready to help you make those snap judgments that can be the difference between being involved in an incident or avoiding it entirely.

## Hire risk

Despite the unpredictable weather, the UK is still a popular holiday destination and many visitors opt for a rental car to give them optimum freedom of movement. Unfortunately many of them just don't prepare themselves well enough, either in terms of vehicle control or knowledge about UK rules, regulations and protocol.

It's not quite as easy to spot a rental car as it used to be but if you're in a stationary queue of vehicles it's worth checking out the vehicle in front for signs of a vehicle hire firm's name, either on the number plate or on a sticker on the rear screen.



You can then be fully prepared for an unexpected manoeuvre and make allowances accordingly. Give tourists some latitude and don't allow yourself to get stressed. Most of us have driven in unfamiliar territory at some stage in our lives and it isn't always easy to absorb all the information required to make a perfect decision every time.

Just think back to those occasions yourself, leave a plenty of space to the front and rear and then keep saying to yourself "What if....."

## Residuals up in smoke

Painter and decorator Gordon Williams is challenging his £30 fine for smoking in his van – deemed as a workplace and therefore covered by the smoking ban. But leading vehicle auction company, BCA, is warning that Mr. Williams, and other small business drivers like him, could face costs much higher than just the cost of a fine.

Tim Naylor, PR Manager at BCA, commented "Presentation is one of the strongest price factors in the used car market and becomes even more important when used vehicle values are under pressure, as they are now.



"Presentation is not just about how it looks, but how it smells! As well as the potential fine if caught smoking in a work vehicle – which is classed as a public place – the loss of value should be another good reason for businesses to make sure employees avoid lighting up in company vans.

"Small businesses would do well to follow the lead set by professional business sellers, who realised that smoker's vehicles were less desirable and were depreciating at a faster rate," added Naylor. "At the end of the day, drivers don't want to be reminded of the previous owner every time they get behind the steering wheel."

## Caravanger

As the busiest travel weekend of the summer approaches, Autoglass is warning motorists of a new stress-related phenomenon – 'caravanger'.

The condition is experienced by drivers stuck behind a slow moving caravan and, according to a poll by Autoglass, regularly affects two out of three motorists, with men twice as likely to let their irritation get the better of them as women.



With more and more people trying to beat the credit crunch by holidaying in the UK this year, it is predicted that more caravans than ever will be on our roads. The figure could be as high as one million over the coming weeks. As a result, Autoglass is expecting incidents of 'caravanger' to soar and is appealing to road users to remain calm.

Caravan drivers are required by law to drive 10mph slower than cars, which can be frustrating for other drivers, particularly in places where it is not possible to overtake.

Incidentally, don't forget that DriveTech provides Real World Combination Trailer Towing courses. If your organisation has a need for these or existing drivers need a refresher, please make contact with the FleetSafe Division Account Development Manager Kelly Robertson, on 01344 467886 or email her at [fleetsafe@drivetech.co.uk](mailto:fleetsafe@drivetech.co.uk)

### **Prison threat**

Drivers who kill are to be given tougher sentences that could result in a maximum 14 years in prison, following the publication of new guidance to judges and magistrates by the Sentencing Guidelines Council.

The council says that the new guidelines, which also cover the use of mobile phones while driving, send a clear message to judges and magistrates that driving offences which result in death are serious offences and should receive appropriate sentences.



Lengthy custodial sentences are recommended by the Council for cases involving prolonged, persistent and deliberate bad driving or where drivers are intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

The guidelines cover four offences:

- Causing death by dangerous driving
- Causing death by careless driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Causing death by careless driving
- Causing death by driving unlicensed, disqualified or uninsured drivers.

The latter two offences were introduced by the Road Safety Act 2006 and will come into force on a date to be announced.

The new advice says that if an offender was distracted by a hand-held mobile phone when the offence was committed, the offence will be treated as 'particularly serious'. The guidelines also state that reading or composing text messages over a period of time whilst at the wheel will be likely to result in an offence being in the higher level of seriousness and offenders should serve up to seven years in prison.

### **Fatigue tragedy**

Back in August 2006 lorry driver Colin Wrighton dozed off at the wheel and ploughed into the back of a traffic queue, killing a motorist instantly. Although originally charged with death by dangerous driving, it later transpired that Mr. Wrighton was suffering with Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA), at which point the charges were dropped.

However the coroner investigating the circumstances of the tragedy is now calling for a change in the law to make it mandatory for drivers to be screened for the condition. “It is my intention to prepare a Rule 43 report to the Lord Chancellor concerning OSA in an endeavour to reduce the number of deaths that arise annually from this condition,” he said.



Disturbingly, it is estimated that 80% of those who drive for a living have OSA that remains undiagnosed.

### **Licence loophole closed**



In the last newsletter we mentioned the reciprocal agreements that are now in place within the EU to exchange information about errant licence holders. As part of a raft of regulation changes it will now also be impossible for disqualified drivers to apply for a licence in another EU country where they do not live in an attempt to avoid their ban.

### **Dicing with death**

According to a survey by Sainsbury’s Car Insurance, 65% of drivers admit to engaging in potentially dangerous activities behind the wheel.



Apparently 41% of the 1000 drivers surveyed confessed to eating or drinking whilst driving and 28% to driving whilst dangerously tired. 17% also brazenly owned up to speeding.

### **Issued by the DriveTech Communications Department.**

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