

Bringing you important news for business drivers - June 2011

AA DRIVETECH WORKS ALONGSIDE BRAKE AWARD WINNER

In winning arguably the most important award at the annual Fleet Forum Awards for Excellence – Road Risk Manager of the Year – Richard Hill of VolkerRail acknowledged the vital part that AA DriveTech played in achieving a dramatic 66% reduction in crashes since he took on the responsibility some two years ago.

“AA DriveTech’s flexible approach to client requirements has been key to the successful delivery of VolkerRail driver workshops” admitted Richard after the ceremony, which took place at a gala event at Alton Towers in early June.

TAKING A PENALTY

The media coverage resulting from the alleged transfer of penalty points from a government minister to his wife as a result of a NIP for speeding has raised the whole issue of driving licence legality in the UK fleet world.



While validating a licence with the DVLA will not specifically highlight that this practice has taken place in the past, it will nonetheless send out a firm signal to employees that licences are being regularly scrutinised by the issuing body.

The ongoing problem when it comes to making penalties stick is the identification of who was driving at the time of the offence, as not all cameras provide this degree of detail. This is where fuel card or telematics records are useful.

Not that any readers of the newsletter would ever countenance such a thing but the brokering of a points transfer between employees is effectively perverting the course of justice, for which the penalty is a custodial sentence.

More information about AA DriveTech’s highly popular licence validation service can be obtained from: www.aadrivetech.com/fleetsafe/os_driving_licence.htm

INSURANCE COVER FOR DEMONSTRATION DRIVES

Demonstration drives are a key aspect of our practical driver training courses. In the past there have been question marks over the insurance implications of carrying out demonstration drives in certain employee's vehicles, particularly if they are classified as being part of a so-called 'grey fleet'.

All our trainers are now insured to provide demonstration drives in any vehicle (excluding hire cars) with the owner's consent. This applies to both AA DriveTech and AA Risk Management Solutions clients, and this will be a significant benefit to each driver's training experience.

MORE INSURANCE ISSUES



Although unlikely to affect business drivers answerable to a professional fleet manager, a change in the law last month means that anyone that owns a vehicle of any sort must now have continuous insurance or declare the vehicle officially off the road [SORN].

In real terms this means that there should be far fewer uninsured vehicles on Britain's roads and therefore less chance of your employees being hit by one, with all the attendant waste of admin time that results.

FOREIGN NATIONAL LEGALITY

As a foreign national driving in the UK, the legality of your driving licence is largely dictated by one's residency status. Up to now the term 'resident' hasn't been defined by the DVLA but there have been developments recently on this issue which may be of interest to those of you with foreign nationals driving for business purposes on your behalf.

The DVLA's definition now appears to be that 'Normal residence' is taken to mean the place where someone usually lives for at least 185 days in each calendar year because of personal or occupational ties, or, in the case of someone with no occupational ties, because of personal ties which show close links between that person and the place where he/she is living. However, the ultimate decision is down to the individual concerned and he/she must be prepared to justify his/her status if challenged.

Despite this legal definition placing the majority of the responsibility for compliance on the individual, we would take the view that the employer still has a duty of care to ensure the employee is compliant, where the discharge of his/her duties requires the employee to drive.

250 CHARACTER TIP OF THE MONTH #1

Combat the effects of the sun. Clean all internal screen surfaces weekly. Ensure screen wash contains proper additive. Clean wiper blades with vinegar and newspaper. Use clean sunglasses. When parked stow anything that could be damaged by heat build up.

TRACTOR WOES



We've all got frustrated from time to time after being held up by a slow moving tractor but new research by University College London has proved that being held up in this way will only add between one and two per cent to your total journey. This is surprising considering that the UK's 250,000 tractors share only 132, 352 miles of rural minor roads!

In another report resulting from interviews with 10,000 18 to 64 year olds, it appears that men get seven times more stressed in traffic than women, largely as a result of their in-built 'fight or flight response'.

As we always try and emphasise during our Real World Combination courses, just relax, go with the flow and don't let the frustration get to you. It will only cloud your judgement and lead to unnecessary risk taking.

If you've identified a fleet driver who is having problems with managing emotional response in trying situations, it's worth taking preventative action and talking to AA DriveTech about a bespoke practical driver development course that tackles the specific issues at the heart of the problem. For more information, email fleetsafe@AADrivetech.com.

LEAD-FOOTED BRITAIN

In recent survey by a leading tyre company, 90% of motorists said they were concerned about the rising cost of fuel but 40% admitted they hadn't got a clue when it comes to fuel-saving driving techniques. This ignorance is costing the average driver £300 a year, which equates to a staggering £1 billion a year in unnecessary expenditure on fuel.

A couple of months ago we worked out that the average the cost of fuelling a 100 vehicle fleet now would be £365,454, compared to £289,090 this time last year [100 vehicles @ 33mpg average; 20K miles p.a.; fuel @ £1.05 per litre/£4.78 per gallon]. That's a staggering 26% increase!

If you want to make a real improvement to your fleet running costs you should consider our **Fuel Save 15** economy driving course, particularly for your high mileage drivers. By applying its techniques the fuel expenditure in the example above could have been cut by some £50,000. For more information please contact fleetsafe@AADrivetech.com or call The Sales Hotline on 01256 495732.

250 CHARACTER TIP OF THE MONTH #2

Try this to help concentration. When driving, look around you and identify potential hazards. Rate the overall risk out of 10, 10 being the most dangerous. Monitor and score each situation. 10 = max concentration needed. 1 = you can relax a bit.

LATEST NCAP RESULTS



The Nissan Leaf, as well as the revised Volvo V60 and Ford Focus models, have all been awarded the coveted Euro NCAP five star safety rating. In addition the Focus also receives separate Euro NCAP Advanced awards for its



Active City Stop and Lane Keeping Aid technologies.

MOT REMINDER SERVICE

Of less value to fleet managers admittedly but nonetheless useful for business drivers with private vehicles at home, VOSA has introduced an MOT reminder service via text message. For a one off cost of £1.50 you get three text reminders prior to your MOT due date – five weeks before, two weeks before and the day before. For more information see

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/OwningAVehicle/Mot/DG_192284

HAVE YOUR SAY



With business drivers clocking up far more mileage than the average motorist, they tend to be the most opinionated when it comes to criticism of the rules and regulations. Now there's the chance for all those armchair legislators to express their views about what driving-related regulations should be ditched, modified or merged together.

Everybody who drives is being encouraged to go online and contribute to the debate, which is attempting to find ways to cut down on so-called 'red tape'. To have your say go to:

www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/home/index/

...and news from AA DriveTech itself:

Training the Trainers

AA DriveTech's on-going trainer development programme continues in the background as we work to develop and nurture new and existing talent. As this involves trainers accompanying other senior trainers on client training sessions, we hope it doesn't cause too much inconvenience but you will benefit from enhanced training standards in the future.

Non driving related health and safety training

AA DriveTech can now deliver a 'Workstation Training and Assessment' course. It can be accessed either as part of the 'FleetRiskManager' e-learning suite or as a stand-alone e-learning module, and there is also a version available for the partially sighted.

The module helps the employee set up their Display Screen Equipment [DSE] and working environment so that they are comfortable during the working day and thus fully productive. Its interactive approach, using diagrams, graphics and questions, helps the employee to understand the key issues and receive guidance on achieving the optimum working posture whilst using the DSE.

If you require further information, please contact fleetsafe@AADrivetech.com or call the sales hotline on 01256 495732.

AA DriveTech at the Health and Safety Expo – NEC in May 2011

We were delighted to catch up with a number of our clients at the show, held over three days in May at the NEC. We also met a number of new companies looking to adopt road risk programmes both in the short, medium and long term – the conclusion from the show being driver risk is clearly on the agenda of many, many health and safety professionals, as well as fleet managers.

Help for Heroes

Many, many thanks for all the support and donations for AA DriveTech's participation in the Help for Heroes 4x4 European Rally. At time of writing, we have commitments for over £1000, so

thanks to all our clients who contributed to our effort. If you wish to add a personal donation, please visit <http://www.bmycharity.com/H4H4x4AADriveTech> - any small amount is appreciated.

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