



**QFleet**

# Road Safety Manual

**FOR THE QUEENSLAND  
GOVERNMENT VEHICLE FLEET**

# Important Notice

The information presented in the QFleet Road Safety Manual for the Queensland Government Vehicle Fleet (the manual) and information contained in links to associated resources is intended for general information only. The manual should not be viewed as a definitive or up to date guide to the law. Readers should refer to the Work Health & Safety Act 2011, Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

(Qld) Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, and Transport Operations (Road Use Management – Road Rules) Regulation 2009, Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012. For information in relation to workplace health and safety obligations and road rules readers should seek their own legal advice regarding their legal obligations.

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for the Queensland Government Vehicle Fleet  
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# Foreword

With road crashes making up over a third of all occupational fatalities in Australia, the importance of road safety can never be ignored.

In a bid to reduce this toll, the Queensland Government is committed to delivering targeted programs to manage these risks, with particular focus on fleet drivers – who we know travel twice the annual distance and have around 50 per cent more crashes than drivers of private vehicles.

As the Queensland Government’s fleet manager, QFleet provides advice and consultation on fleet, road and driver safety related issues. The *QFleet Road Safety Manual* has been developed to provide practical advice to agencies, managers and fleet managers on measures to reduce risks associated with work-related driving.

As safe work-related driving is a shared responsibility, this manual also aims to empower our fleet drivers and help them make safe driving choices. For these drivers, their vehicle can be like a second office, and we need to ensure both their safety and that of other drivers with whom they share the road.

I trust the *QFleet Road Safety Manual for the Queensland Government Vehicle Fleet* will be a valuable safety tool for you and your team.

**Hon Mick de Brenni MP**

Minister for Housing and Public Works





## Acknowledgements

The *QFleet Road Safety Manual for the Queensland Government Vehicle Fleet* is based on the publication: *A Handbook for Workplaces: Guide to Safe Work-related Driving, November 2008, Edition No 1*, a joint initiative of the Victorian Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and WorkSafe Victoria. Reference can be made to this source at either [worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://worksafe.vic.gov.au) or [tac.vic.gov.au](http://tac.vic.gov.au).

QFleet has been granted a non-exclusive licence to use this work for the purposes of this manual.

The document *A Handbook for Workplaces: Guide to Safe Work-related Driving, November 2008, Edition No 1* forms a substantial part of the manual in terms of content and structure. Note that material from this source is not separately referenced as footnotes throughout the manual.

This acknowledgement therefore acts as a principal reference of that source.

Approval has also been granted to QFleet to use material referenced in the manual where the information forms a substantial part of copyright material from third party sources. All research material has been referenced as necessary using footnotes throughout the Manual. In particular, QFleet acknowledges the valuable input of research conducted by the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q) and the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) used in the manual.

QFleet would like to thank all contributors and acknowledges their support of QFleet's Road Safety Program for the Queensland Government motor vehicle fleet.



# Introduction

Safe work-related driving is a shared responsibility. This manual aims to provide practical advice to agencies, managers, fleet managers and drivers on measures to reduce risks associated with work-related driving.

This manual encourages the adoption of sound workplace health and safety (WHS) practices and provides information to agencies as to how to develop a work-related safe driving program, including a policy and related processes.

The advice is presented in the context that the vehicle is a workplace and thus covered by the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and associated regulations.

## Application

The focus of this manual is to provide assistance to agencies to better manage their work-related driving tasks to eliminate or reduce risks as far as is reasonably practicable. This can be achieved by incorporating practices which aim to achieve safer work-related driving outcomes.

This manual deals with work-related driving using a condensed risk management framework as a basis for the development of a safe driving program. The process begins with assessing risk factors on and off the road, identifying and implementing control measures, through to monitoring and reviewing work-related driving safety.

Queensland Government agencies should aim to develop and implement policies and practices based on this manual.

This manual primarily focuses on light vehicles such as passenger vehicles, 4WDs and light commercial vehicles such as utilities and small vans.

It should be noted that although this manual focuses on light vehicles, road safety management for heavy vehicles should be implemented in a similar manner. The Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012 provides further information and documents additional responsibilities for heavy vehicles. More information can also be found in the QFleet Heavy Vehicle Safety Fact Sheet.

## Work-related driving in Australia is a major risk exposure for employers

The risks associated with work-related driving are often underestimated. The following statistics highlight the significance of work-related driving as a safety issue:

- Work-related driving crashes account for approximately 38 per cent of all occupational fatalities in Australia.<sup>1</sup>
- Data from the Australian Safety and Compensation Council (ASCC) indicate that vehicle crashes represent 31 per cent of all compensated work fatalities.<sup>2</sup>
- Work-related road crashes incur a greater average time lost in worker absence than any other workplace claim.<sup>3</sup>
- Road crashes are the most common form of work related fatalities.<sup>4</sup>



**38%** of all occupational fatalities in Australia are work-related driving crashes

Work-related road crashes incur a greater average time lost in worker absence than any other workplace claim.

Road crashes are the most common form of work related fatalities.

The following statistics highlight road safety as an issue of social cost and organisational performance utilising the willingness-to-pay method of valuing human life:

- Each year in Australia there are approximately 1,400 road crash fatalities and 32,500 hospitalisations.
- The human impact and trauma associated with road crashes is devastating and the total financial cost of road crashes to the Australian economy is estimated at \$27 billion<sup>5</sup>, or 1.8 per cent of Gross Domestic Product and the equivalent of 18.3 per cent of health expenditure.<sup>5</sup>
- The average cost of a fatal road crash is estimated at \$2.67 million, a crash requiring hospitalisation is \$266,000 and a non-hospitalised crash is \$14,700.<sup>6</sup>
- The estimated total cost of vehicle repairs resulting from the 1.16 million vehicles which were involved in an estimated 635,000 crashes in 2006 was \$4.2 billion.
- In Australia, the majority of locally produced passenger vehicles are purchased for work use and more than half of all new vehicle registrations annually are registered as fleet vehicles<sup>7</sup>. Company drivers also travel twice the annual distance and have approximately 50 per cent more crashes than drivers of private vehicles<sup>7</sup>. Consequently, fleet vehicles contribute to a large proportion of the cost of crashes in

Australia.

There are a number of reasons for this increased risk, including exposure – fleet drivers are likely to spend more time driving and travel longer distances in a given period, and are therefore more likely to be involved in a crash.

Another principal reason for an increased crash risk relates to the fact that the vehicle becomes a workplace for the driver.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, fleet drivers are likely to perceive a need to make driving time more productive by using devices such as mobile phones, eating while driving and being distracted by work-related issues, thus increasing their risk. They may also be more likely to travel at excessive speeds between appointments and drive aggressively.<sup>9</sup>

Given this high risk profile, the benefits of a work-related driving safety program can be significant and may include:

- reduced death and injury and all their related personal, social and economic costs
- improved organisational performance, legal compliance and financial performance.

● Company drivers travel twice the annual distance and have around 50 per cent more crashes than drivers of private vehicles



# WHS law and work-related driving safety

## Vehicle and driver safety is covered by both WHS legislation and road traffic laws.

WHS obligations are owned by a number of persons, including employers, workers and persons with management or control of a workplace.<sup>10</sup> A workplace includes a vehicle used for work-related purposes. A person who has a WHS obligation may have more than one WHS obligation. This manual concentrates on the WHS duties imposed on employers and workers.

A person conducting a business or undertaking (referred to in this manual as an agency) has an obligation to ensure the WHS of their workers and any other persons is not put at risk from work carried out as part of the business or undertaking. A duty imposed on a person to ensure health and safety requires the person to eliminate risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable; and if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks, to minimise them so far as is reasonably practicable.

Discharging this obligation includes, but is not limited to:

- providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment
- ensuring safe systems of work
- providing information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure health and safety
- monitoring the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace for the purpose of preventing illness or injury to workers.

A person with management or control of a workplace (which includes a vehicle used for the performance of work) must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the workplace, the means of entering and exiting the workplace and anything arising

from the workplace are without risks to the health and safety of any person.

In regards to WHS, 'reasonably practicable' means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety, taking into account and weighing up:

1. the likelihood of the hazard or risk
2. the degree of harm that may result from the hazard or risk
3. knowledge about the hazard and ways of eliminating or minimising the risk
4. the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk
5. after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

Applied to work-related driving, the obligations of an employer may include providing their employees with information about:

- the safety features of the vehicle and instruction on how to use them
- the causes and effects of fatigue
- the safe use of the vehicle and any new technologies like in-dash displays that drivers might be unfamiliar with
- the safe maintenance of the vehicle.

The specific requirements of the road safety laws also have to be met and they cover matters such as vehicle roadworthiness, driver licensing and road rules.

1. Safe Work Australia, 2014, Work-Related Traumatic Injury Fatalities, Australia. 2. SafeWork Australia, 2011, Compendium of Workers Compensation Statistics Australia 2010-11: p.51. CARRS-Q, State of the Road: Work-related Road Safety Fact Sheet, 2012 4. Haworth, N., Tingvall, C., & Kowadlo, N. (2000). Review of best practice road safety initiatives in the corporate

and/or business environment (No. 166). Safe Work Australia (2012). Work related traumatic injury fatalities, Australia 2010-11. Commonwealth of Australia. 5. Australian Transport Council (2011). National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 and Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Economics, 2014, Research Report - Impact of Road Trauma and Measures to Improve



Both employers and employees have duties to each other and to others who might be affected by the work they undertake. In the case of work-related driving, this includes other road users, passengers and people at locations where the driver stops to carry out work.

These requirements would be supported in an employer's WHS program by:

- procuring and maintaining a safe and roadworthy fleet
- ensuring employees have the appropriate driver licences
- scheduling work to account for speed limits and managing fatigue
- providing appropriate information and training on work-related driving safety
- monitoring and supervision of the work-related driving safety program
- providing training on vehicle features, operations and technology.

## Employees also have WHS obligations

Employees and any other persons at a workplace (including a vehicle used for work-related purposes) have the following WHS obligations:

- to take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety
- to take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons

- to comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the person conducting the business or undertaking to allow the person to comply with this Act
- to co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the person conducting the business or undertaking relating to health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to workers<sup>10</sup>.

Applied to work-related driving an employee's duties would include:

- holding a current, valid driver's licence
- abiding by all road rules (e.g. speed limits, alcohol consumption)
- refraining from driving if impaired by tiredness or medication
- reporting any incidents required by law or by the employer's program
- carrying out routine vehicle checks required by the employer.

Both employers and employees have duties to each other and to others who might be affected by the work they undertake. In the case of work-related driving, this includes other road users, passengers and people at locations where the driver stops to carry out work.

Outcomes, Report 140. 6. Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Economics, 014, Research Report - Impact of Road Trauma and Measures to Improve Outcomes, Report 140 7. AFMA (2008). Review of the automotive industry 2008, submission by the Australasian Fleet Managers Association to the Australian Government. [www.afma.net.au/](http://www.afma.net.au/) Australian Transport Council (2011). National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020. 8. Broughton, J., Baughan, C., Pearce, L., Smith, L., and Buckle, G. 2003,

Work-related road accidents. TRL Report No. 582. Crowthorne, United Kingdom: TRL Limited. 9. Symmons, M & Haworth, N. (2005). Safety attitudes and behaviours in work-. 10. Work, Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work, Health and Safety Regulation 2011 related driving. Stage 1: Analyses of crash data. Monash University Accident Research Centre, Report Number 2



## WHS responsibilities for work-related driving safety

| Responsible person   | WHS duty  | Driver/Vehicle safety example   |
|--|---|---|
| Employer<br>(Undertaken as part of WHS programs and may involve fleet and line managers in larger organisations) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment</li> <li>To ensure safe systems of work</li> <li>To consult with employees on WHS matters</li> <li>To provide information, instruction, training and supervision</li> <li>To meet statutory reporting and recording requirements</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Employ rigorous safety criteria for new vehicle purchases and fitouts</li> <li>✓ Consult with employees on driver safety procedures</li> <li>✓ Provide relevant driver induction and training, including tasks in and around the vehicle</li> <li>✓ Record and report work-related driving incidents</li> <li>✓ Ensure vehicles are well maintained</li> </ul> |
| Employee (driver)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To comply with the employer's instructions, policies and procedures to make the workplace safe</li> <li>Not to wilfully place at risk the WHS of any person at the workplace</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Comply with road safety laws, such as speed limits, drug and alcohol limits, mobile phone use and seat belt use</li> <li>✓ Follow driver safety procedures</li> <li>✓ Report incidents</li> <li>✓ Report vehicle defects</li> </ul>  |

## Fleet management and work-related driver safety program

On behalf of the Government, QFleet manages concurrent fleet policy priorities relating to safety, utilisation and procurement.

Agencies are expected to adopt a strategic view which supports best practice fleet management to ensure vehicle resources are:

- considered in the context of emissions and utilisation levels and financial considerations
- selected for their fit-for-purpose application
- maintained according to manufacturers' vehicle service plans

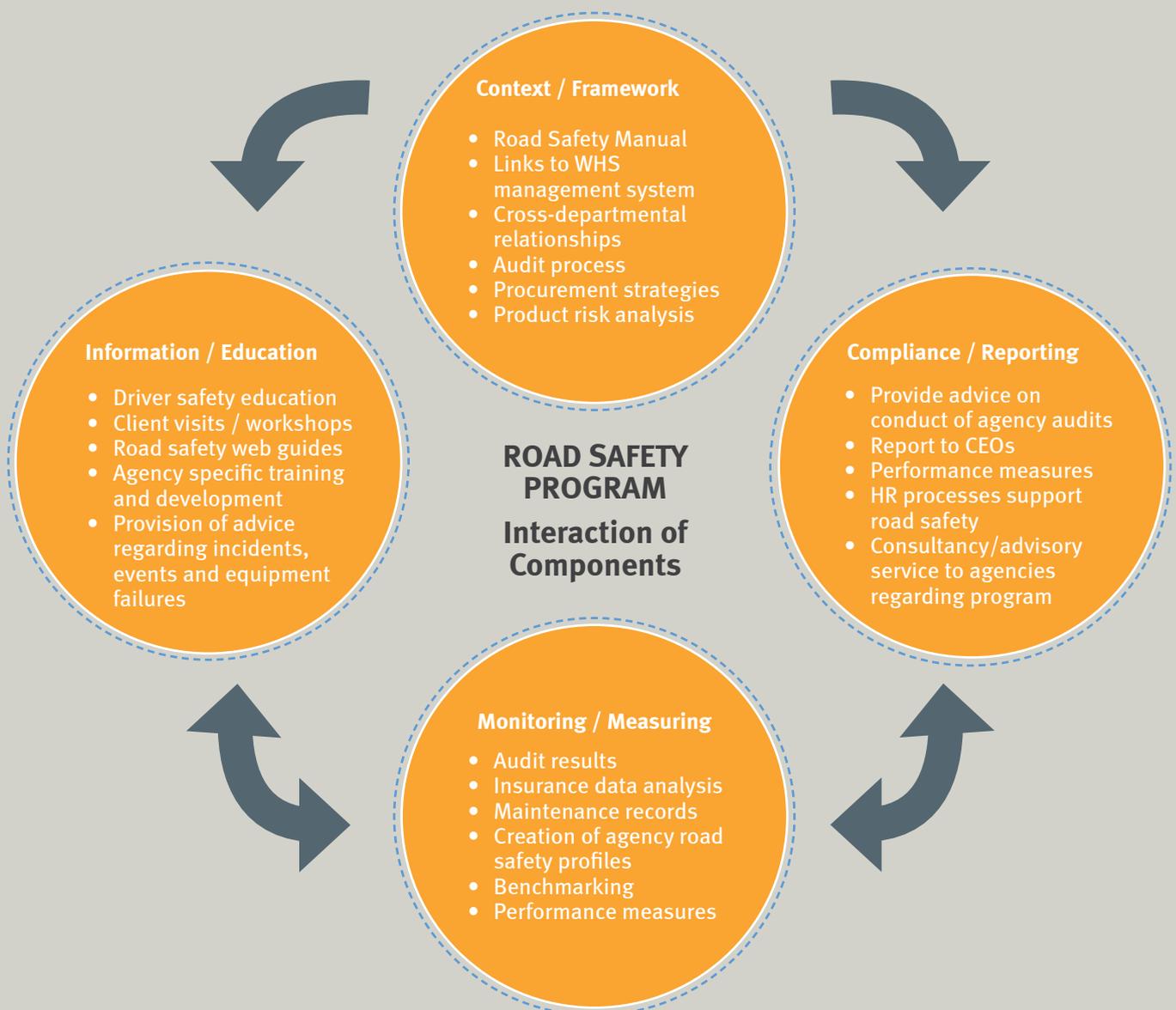
- managed by the organisations and drivers so as to minimise costs related to injury and assets.

As this is a program for the leased fleet, it represents a strategic framework of linked components that QFleet will work with agencies to achieve, within the areas of information and education, monitoring and measuring, and compliance and reporting.

Agencies should structure their work-related safe driving programs to suit their operational and service delivery requirements.



## QFleet's Road Safety Program for the Queensland Government vehicle fleet: Interaction of components



The following table shows examples of key elements that should be considered within a work-related safe driving program.

| Work-related safe driving program   |  |
|---|--|
| Key elements  | Best practice elements   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporation of the safe driving program as an objective in the agency's planning process</li> <li>• Development and implementation of a safe vehicle use policy/guideline/standard</li> <li>• Development of a marketing and communication plan for the safe driving program</li> <li>• Inclusion of vehicle incident reporting as part of WHS recording and reporting processes</li> <li>• Allocation of appropriate human, financial and material resources to the safe driving program</li> <li>• Inclusion of driver safety principles and practices into staff induction</li> <li>• Training and education of all staff who drive regularly and the provision of specialist training and education where required (e.g. those required to operate 4WD vehicles and/or operate vehicles in off-road conditions or remote locations)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of processes appropriate to agency requirements to monitor driver safety</li> <li>• Inquiry following incidents or crashes</li> <li>• Provision of feedback to drivers following incidents or crashes</li> <li>• Inclusion of driving requirements in position descriptions, performance plans and training and development plans where appropriate</li> <li>• Conduct of an annual needs assessment</li> <li>• Development of evaluation processes to assess the program impact (whether the program objectives are being achieved) and the program outcomes (whether the long term effect of the program is likely to be achieved)</li> </ul> |

**One of the key elements of a work-related safe driving program is regular training and education and specialist training and education where required.**



# Structure of the manual: a risk management approach to work-related driving safety

Work-related driving is potentially a high risk activity and this manual aims to provide guidance on how to manage these risks. The conventional approach to risk assessment in the context of WHS is dealt with in a series of steps.<sup>11 & 12</sup>

For the purpose of this manual, the risk management framework has been condensed into three key steps and provides a basis for a sequential process which agencies can follow to manage work-related driving safety.

This three step sequential process forms the structure of the manual and provides the basis for work driving safety risk management.

## Step 1: Assess risk factors on and off the road

A risk assessment should be used to establish who or what might be harmed and the extent of the harm. The assessment should determine whether work-related driving hazards are likely to result in incidents that could injure drivers, or others, and how severe the consequences might be.

## Step 2: Decide on and implement control measures

Successful management of WHS depends on planning to eliminate or minimise risks at the earliest stage possible and then using other counter-measures to respond to risks that arise. The key planning or preparation steps are set out below. Agencies can work concurrently on a range of these strategies.

Typical risk controls for work-related driving include:

- create a culture of work-related driving safety
- consult on work-related driving
- develop work-related driving safety policies and procedures
- select safe vehicles
- maintain a safe fleet
- ensure drivers are competent and fit to drive
- inform and supervise drivers
- plan trips to minimise risks.

## Step 3: Monitor and review fleet safety

To remain effective, a vehicle and driver safety program needs to be monitored and regularly reviewed. Some matters, such as incidents, require an immediate response whereas others should be part of routine checks.

Reviews should include the assessment of crash, incident and inquiry data and at-risk behaviours (e.g. infringements).

Step 3 of this manual provides further suggestions for actions that can be taken by agencies in monitoring and reviewing their work-related driving safety program.



# WHS law and work-related driving safety

## Step 1: Assess risk factors on and off the road

Work-related driving is associated with a number of risk factors that alone or in combination increase both the likelihood and the severity of an incident.

Prior to identifying risks and developing strategies to manage those risks, hazards should be identified.

### Identification of hazards

In the context of work-related driving safety and fleet management, potential hazards include:

- inappropriate or unsafe use of vehicles
- untrained drivers
- poorly maintained vehicles
- poor scheduling of trips
- road conditions
- use of mobile phones while driving
- driving while distracted
- fatigue
- driving while under time pressure
- speed
- incorrect towing methods
- unsuitable vehicle accessories
- unsecure items or loads
- not wearing a seat belt.

The extent that hazards represent a risk to an organisation and its employees will depend on the progress an agency has made in terms of its road safety program.



11. Refer to Australian Standard, AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009: Risk management - Principles and guidelines. 12. Refer to Section 18 of Work, Health and Safety Act 2011 and the How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code

of Practice 2011 at [http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/about/Publications/Documents/633/How\\_to\\_Manage\\_Work\\_Health\\_and\\_Safety\\_Risks.pdf](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/about/Publications/Documents/633/How_to_Manage_Work_Health_and_Safety_Risks.pdf)

## Workplace risk assessment

The table below provides examples of three levels of risk management strategies to assist agencies to determine their current level of work-related driving safety risk management.

| High risk  | Moderate risk  | Low Risk   |
|--|--|--|
| No incorporation of driver safety program into planning process  | Driver safety program is incorporated into operational planning  | Driver safety program is incorporated into strategic, operational and other planning processes   |
| No consultation with employees about driver and vehicle safety   | Consultation with drivers about vehicle safety only on a reactive basis  | There is consultation with employees and their representatives through committees and work groups  |
| No driver and vehicle safety policies and procedures   | Either a policy or procedures have been developed  | There is a safe driving and vehicle selection policy signed off by employees   |
| Driver and vehicle safety are not part of the WHS program  | Driver safety is only considered as part of other high risk work   | Driver and vehicle safety is included as part of the WHS program   |
| Work is not scheduled to reduce driving risks  | Drivers are able to reschedule trip times when faced with changing conditions                                      | Safest routes, adequate time and non-driving alternatives are routinely considered   |
| Drivers are not given induction training in driver safety  | A brief verbal handover is conducted for new staff with further vehicle and driving information given upon request | All new staff who are required to drive undertake an induction and are given further vehicle and driving information and training proactively as part of a work-related driver safety program  |
| Vehicles are not subject to any regular checks   | Vehicle checks done at scheduled service intervals   | Regular vehicle checks are undertaken by drivers and/or agency staff   |
| Information is not provided to employees about driving hazards   | Drivers are provided with basic vehicle operating information  | Drivers are provided with information about hazards such as adverse road conditions  |
| Responsibilities for work-related driving safety are neither allocated nor understood                          | Supervisor and driver responsibilities are defined   | Senior management responsibilities are defined as are those for everyone involved in the driving task  |
| There is no basic vehicle maintenance program  | The manufacturer's service requirements are partly followed  | All vehicles are maintained to manufacturer's service requirements   |
| There are no emergency procedures for incidents on the road. Drivers rely on the standard 000 emergency number | Drivers are provided with agency preferred emergency contact numbers and associated detail of emergency procedures | Drivers have access to a copy of the QFleet Driver Companion <sup>13</sup><br><br>There is a system in place for providing drivers operating vehicles in remote locations or in adverse conditions with a first aid kit and appropriate communications equipment |
| There is no monitoring of injury or crash data   | Only records of major damage incidents are kept  | Records of fleet and driver incidents, crashes and injuries are kept, actioned, monitored and reviewed to improve performance  |

13. <http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/QFleetDriverCompanion.pdf>



## Identification of risks

In this section, the nature of some of the major risk factors are examined further and the ways to eliminate or reduce these risks are outlined.

### Risk 1: Speed

Speeding is a major cause of serious and fatal vehicle crashes in Queensland. Every kilometre per hour over the speed limit not only affects whether a crash happens, but also the severity of the crash.

A 5km/h reduction in a 60km/h zone can result in a 31 per cent reduction in crashes, and the risk of crashing increases by nearly six times when travelling 20km/h over the speed limit.<sup>14</sup>

Speed has a big impact on stopping distance e.g. in optimal conditions a vehicle travelling at 60km/h would come to almost a complete stop in approximately 45 metres.

### Risk 2: Drugs and alcohol

Use of drugs and alcohol impair a driver's ability to safely use a vehicle. A driver with a blood alcohol level of .05 is twice as likely to be involved in a crash<sup>15</sup> and the presence of alcohol increases the susceptibility to injury if involved in a crash.

The presence of substances such as cannabis and the drug methyl-amphetamine (e.g. ice, speed) increase the risk of being involved in a fatal crash.

For further information relating to drugs, alcohol and medication see the QFleet Fitness to Drive Fact Sheet.

The QFleet Fact Sheets referred to throughout this manual provide further details in relation to these and other areas of road safety related risk. They are available on our website.

#### Risk can be reduced by:

- observing speed limits
- driving at a speed appropriate for conditions
- reducing speed where pedestrian activity (particularly children) is high
- reducing speed when the vehicle is heavily loaded or towing a trailer
- responding to speed warning alerts
- adjusting arrival times to compensate for delays
- planning trips taking into account timeframes and speed limits.

#### Risk can be reduced by:

- adopting a zero drugs and alcohol policy for work-related driving
- avoiding or minimising alcohol consumption prior to driving
- complying with road rules in relation to the prescribed level of alcohol
- using transport alternatives at functions involving alcohol
- taking into account the influence of prescribed and other medications before driving.

14. Kloeden, C.N. Ponte, G and McLean, AJ. 2001 Travelling Speed and the risk of crash involvement on rural roads (CR 204) Australian Transport Safety Bureau: Canberra.

15. Australian Transport Council (2011). National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020. 16. CARRS-Q Fact sheet Sleepiness and fatigue [http://www.carrsq.qut.edu.au/publications/corporate/fatigue\\_fs.pdf](http://www.carrsq.qut.edu.au/publications/corporate/fatigue_fs.pdf)



### Risk 3: Fatigue

Fatigue is mental or physical tiredness that negatively affects a person's ability to function. It may impair performance by reducing attentiveness, slowing reaction times, affecting judgement and reducing performance in tasks which require skilled control, like driving.

Compared to drivers of non-fleet vehicles, fleet drivers may be at an increased risk of fatigue. Fatigue is a contributing factor in work-related road crashes.<sup>16</sup>

A major cause of driver fatigue is a lack of quality sleep. The effects of fatigue are cumulative and fatigued drivers are often not aware of their condition.

Fatigue is associated with the following factors:

- sustained mental or physical effort
- inadequate rest breaks
- environmental stresses (such as heat, noise and vibration)
- disruption of circadian rhythms (normal cycles of daytime activity and night sleep)
- long periods awake
- inadequate amount or quality of sleep over an extended period.

Signs of driver fatigue such as lane drifting, variations in speed, delayed reactions and reduced concentration, indicate there is already a risk.

Individuals are often unreliable judges of their level of fatigue. Consequently, the role of the employer in planning and scheduling work to minimise fatigue is paramount.

For further information relating to fatigue refer to the QFleet Managing Driver Fatigue Fact Sheet.

### Risk can be reduced by:

- understanding the signs of fatigue
- having sufficient quality sleep before driving and not driving when feeling tired
- avoiding alcohol consumption prior to driving
- taking 15 minute rest breaks with exercise after every two hours of driving
- sharing the driving
- using alternatives such as public transport or taxis
- not driving in the hours when normally asleep e.g. midnight to dawn
- not starting a long trip after a full day's work
- avoiding driving long distances after consuming a large meal; light snacks are recommended
- not using the vehicle's heater because it can induce drowsiness
- keeping the cabin well ventilated and at a comfortable temperature
- keeping the mind active e.g. listening to the car radio
- not getting too comfortable; use wind, noise and an upright seating position to remain alert
- stopping to have a sleep if required
- maintaining good levels of health and fitness through good diet and exercise
- avoiding medications which cause drowsiness
- breaking the journey with an overnight stop, if appropriate.

## Risk 4: Mobile phone use

The use of mobile phones while driving creates distractions from the primary task of driving. The ability to react to other vehicles, judge separation distances and maintain a constant speed are compromised by using a mobile phone.

It is an offence for a driver to use a mobile phone that the driver is holding in their hand while the vehicle is moving, or is stationary but not parked, for example, while waiting at traffic lights. Use includes:

- holding the phone to, or near, the ear whether or not engaged in a phone call
- writing, sending or reading a text message on the phone
- turning the phone on or off
- operating any other function on the phone.

Evidence shows using a mobile phone when driving results in a number of performance impairments, including longer reaction time, impaired lane position awareness, shorter following distances and reduced functional field of view.<sup>17</sup>

Research has shown the risk of a crash increases when using a mobile phone, irrespective of whether the driver is using a hand-held or a hands-free device.<sup>18</sup>

Management should take measures organisationally to ensure that there is no pressure on staff to be contactable while they are known to be travelling.

The safest way for a driver to use a hands-free phone is by:

- setting up the hands-free phone and accessories before commencing the trip
- pulling over and turning the vehicle off before answering or making calls
- turning the phone off and having calls redirected to message bank which can be accessed and actioned when the vehicle is safely stopped
- restricting phone use to an absolute minimum
- keeping calls short
- not taking notes.

For further information relating to mobile phone use and other driver distractions refer to the QFleet Driver Distractions Fact Sheet.

### Risk can be reduced by:

- adopting a policy to ban all use of mobile phones while driving
- complying with the laws relating to use of hand-held phones
- allowing calls to go to message bank
- leaving a message on voicemail advising incoming callers that you are driving and cannot take calls
- answering calls only after the vehicle is pulled over to the side of the road and the engine is turned off.

17. Victorian Parliament (2006), Report of the Road Safety Committee on the Inquiry into Driver Distraction, Parliamentary paper; no. 209. VicRoads. (2011). Driving and mobile phones: A dangerous mix. Fact sheet.

Melbourne: State Government of Victoria. CARRS-Q, State of the road: Mobile phones and driving fact sheet, 2012. 18. Young, K. Regan, M. Hammer, M. (2003) Driver distraction: a review of the literature Monash University Accident



## Risk 5: Adverse conditions

Driving on rough, unsealed roads or on roads subject to extreme conditions, such as fog, ice, flooding or bushfires, presents increased risks.

For further information regarding rural, remote and hazardous driving conditions refer to the QFleet Rural and Remote Driving Fact Sheet.

### Risk can be reduced by:

- planning ahead to use alternative routes
- rescheduling trips to times of less extreme conditions
- providing information about driving techniques in adverse conditions, such as driving slowly in foggy conditions
- using specialist or fit-for-purpose vehicles suitable for conditions
- where appropriate, providing specialist training for driving in adverse conditions
- checking road and weather conditions with relevant authorities prior to commencing the journey e.g. RACQ, Bureau of Meteorology.

## Risk 6: In-vehicle distractions

Distractions divert the driver's attention from the driving task and impact on safety critical measures, such as stopping distances.

Common in-vehicle distractions are other passengers, drinking and eating, reaching for objects, personal grooming, in-vehicle technologies and loose objects.

Approximately one quarter of vehicle crashes in the United States are estimated to result from the driver being inattentive as a result of technology or other distractions.<sup>19</sup> There is evidence that in-vehicle distractions are likely to be the cause of a similar quantity of road crashes in Australia.<sup>20</sup>

For further information relating to driver distractions see the QFleet Driver Distractions Fact Sheet and the Cargo Safety in Passenger Vehicles Fact Sheet.

### Risk can be reduced by:

- not eating or drinking while driving
- presetting music/radio, climate controls, seatbelts and mirrors
- securing any loose objects
- pulling over to adjust equipment, check maps or attend to personal grooming
- asking passengers to help with tasks (e.g. checking map for driver).

McEvoy, S., Stevenson, M., McCartt, A., Woodward, M., Haworth, C., Palamara, P., & Cercarelli, R. (2005). Role of mobile phones in motor vehicle crashes resulting in hospital attendance: A case-crossover study. *BMJ*, 331, 428-30.

19. Ibid 20. Ibid



# WHS law and work-related driving safety

## Step 2: Identify and implement control measures

Successful management of driver safety using a WHS framework depends on planning to eliminate or minimise risks at the earliest stage possible and then using counter-measures to respond to risks that arise.

The key planning or preparation steps are set out below. Agencies can work concurrently on a range of these strategies.

The control measures in this section should operate to limit the frequency and severity of the risk factors identified in Step 1.

It is important to ensure that work procedures are adapted and new procedures implemented to include new or changed controls. Plans for new or changed controls need to be communicated throughout the organisation.

Supervision is necessary, particularly when changes to control measures are being made. The degree of supervision needs to be in keeping with the seriousness of the risk that has been previously assessed.<sup>21</sup>

For more information on putting control measures in place refer to Section 4 of the *How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice 2011* available on the Safe Work Australia website.

### Create a culture of work-related driving safety

Evidence about successful vehicle and driver safety programs points not only to vehicle selection and driver training, but also to the importance of safety to the organisation.

A culture of safety means that a high priority is given to safety and it is backed up by what people at all levels of the organisation say and do.

In many workplaces, work-related driving is considered secondary to the 'real work' that

### Culture checklist

- Are defective vehicles withdrawn from service?
- Is a system in place to identify and report dangerous driving (e.g. traffic offences, blameworthy accidents)?
- Is dangerous driving behaviour challenged?
- Are unsafe situations reported without fear of recrimination?
- Is a contact point provided for people to report incidents of concern?
- Do senior management model and reward good driving behaviour?
- Are driving safety initiatives built into performance plans and training and development plans?

the person does.

A culture of safety recognises that the driving task is often a much higher risk and needs to be managed closely.

In a culture of safety, vehicle and driver safety is treated as part of the overall safety effort and leadership is shown by making decisions about the fleet that benefit safety.

21. For more information on putting control measures in place refer to Section 4 of the *How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice 2011* at [https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/58170/how-to-manage-whs-](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/58170/how-to-manage-whs-)

risks-cop-2011.pdf 22. Reference to Workplace Health and Safety representatives include the role of Workplace Health and Safety Officers.

## Maintain a safe fleet

Selection of the safest possible vehicle needs to be supported by a preventative maintenance program to ensure vehicle safety is maximised.

A maintenance program ensures that the manufacturer's service recommendations are met and that the vehicle complies with road worthiness requirements.

Procedures need to be documented which outline the frequency of vehicle checks to enable reporting of problems and to keep records of maintenance.

Nominating a person to be responsible to maintain the fleet can help to make sure the different maintenance tasks are done and records kept up to date. This would include monitoring the upkeep of weekly logs and inspection checks, ensuring prescribed servicing takes place in accordance with manufacturer specifications and scheduling vehicle inspections.

This activity should be integrated into the employer's system for managing workplace health and safety.

## Consult on work-related driving

Employers must consult on a range of health and safety matters, so far as is reasonably practicable, with WHS representatives<sup>22</sup> and employees who are or are likely to be affected.

The range of health and safety matters includes identifying or assessing hazards or risks and making decisions on how to control risks.

WHS representatives must always be involved in any consultation that affects or is likely to affect the health and safety of members of their designated work group. Additional ways to consult include health and safety committees or regularly scheduled workplace meetings.

Consultation must involve sharing information with WHS representatives and employees, giving them a reasonable opportunity to express their views and taking those views into account.

Whatever the method chosen, consultation is based on the recognition that employee input and participation improves decision making and understanding about health and safety matters.

**In many workplaces, work-related driving is considered secondary to the 'real work' that the person does. A culture of safety recognises that the driving task is often a much higher risk and needs to be managed closely.**

## Culture checklist

- Are WHS representatives and employees consulted where necessary regarding the safety aspects of a vehicle's fit-for-purpose application, prior to its selection?
- Are WHS representatives and employees consulted in the development of procedures for driver and vehicle safety?
- Are WHS representatives and employees consulted about actions taken following incidents?
- Does the WHS committee include work-related driving and vehicle safety on its agenda?
- Are WHS representatives and employees consulted when risk controls are introduced?
- Are WHS representatives and employees consulted on work scheduling?

## Develop work-related driving safety policies and procedures

An agency can incorporate work-related driving safety into its WHS policy or create a separate policy document that complements WHS strategies but deals with the issue as a distinct area of concern. This policy should be developed in consultation with employees or their representatives.

The policy should be communicated to all employees and others who might be impacted by the operation of the fleet.

Employee sign-off on safe driving policies is a way of ensuring everyone has read and understood the policy.

Some policies are quite detailed, but usually the detail is covered in specific procedures which state what has to be done, by whom and when.

These procedures are developed using a risk management methodology and are sometimes called safe work procedures or safe work statements.

Procedures should be relevant to the size and risk of exposure of the organisation.

An agency with a large fleet, operating in difficult conditions and with regular night driving may need more comprehensive procedures than a small fleet doing routine trips in good conditions.

## Select safe vehicles

It has been estimated that if everyone drove the safest car in its category, road trauma involving light passenger vehicles could be reduced by 26 per cent. If each vehicle incorporated the safest design elements for its class, such trauma could be reduced by 40 per cent.<sup>23</sup>

QFleet manages the government's fleet management policy priorities. These priorities include a minimum safety requirement for vehicles and are reflected in QFleet's safety oriented fleet procurement policy.

This policy establishes high vehicle safety standards including consideration of the fitting of advanced vehicle safety features such as electronic stability control, side curtain airbags, seatbelt reminder

systems, intelligent speed adaptation and emergency crash notification.

QFleet's current mandatory safety specification for passenger and sports utility vehicles include airbags, electronic stability control and a five star Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) crash test rating wherever possible. The number of vehicles that meet a five star ANCAP crash test rating will continue to increase as manufacturers improve vehicle safety specifications and as the government fleet is progressively renewed through QFleet's programmed replacement cycle.

Some light commercial vehicles are not appointed with the same level of safety features as those of passenger vehicles. Therefore, it is not possible for QFleet to apply the same minimum safety specification to the entire fleet. QFleet currently has a minimum three star ANCAP rating for light commercial vehicles. This is an outcome which provides improved levels of vehicle safety while still satisfying agency demands for fit-for-purpose vehicles. Some light commercial vehicles achieve a four or five star rating.

QFleet will regularly review and update the mandatory safety specifications for the fleet and take every opportunity to meet with the major vehicle manufacturers and distributors to promote the need for safer vehicles.

When an agency requires a new or replacement vehicle, the vehicle selection process should be based on operational objectives and other related benefits such as a reduction in driving related risk to ensure that the most appropriate vehicles for work-related driving are considered.

Agencies should refer to the requirements for vehicle replacement under Step 5 of the QFleet Fleet Efficiency and Utilisation Policy for the Queensland Government motor vehicle fleet, available on our website.

An effective vehicle selection process is the first step that will lead to the procurement of safer vehicles. The checklist on the following page can be used by agencies for this process.

22. Reference to Workplace Health and Safety representatives include the role of Workplace Health and Safety Officers. 23. Newstead S, Delaney A, Watson

L and Cameron M, 2004. A model for considering the 'total safety' of the light passenger vehicle fleet, report 228, MUARC, Clayton, Victoria.



## Ensure drivers are competent and fit to drive

The earliest point at which safe driving can be raised as an issue with employees is at the recruitment and selection stage.

Safe driving can be included in position descriptions and discussed at job interviews where the job involves significant amounts of driving.

Where appropriate, the selection process may extend to an assessment of previous driving experience including a discussion of the driver's record through referee reports and statements from the applicant.

Formal licensing requirements should be checked and applicants advised of their responsibility to notify the organisation of any changes that may affect their eligibility to drive.

Where the job requirements demand it, medical examinations relating to fitness to drive may be required along with any licence specific requirements such as eyesight testing.

Employees should be reminded of their legal obligation to notify the Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) of any long-term or permanent medical condition that may affect their ability to drive safely. The employee must notify DTMR as soon as the condition develops, or there is an adverse change to an existing condition.

As the identification of unsafe drivers is problematic it is more appropriate to place the emphasis on preparing drivers to operate within the agency's safe driving policy.

For more information refer to both the QFleet Vehicle Fitness for Purpose and Selection Fact Sheet and the Staff Recruitment and Induction Fact Sheet.

## Vehicle selection checklist

- Consult with drivers regarding the vehicle selection process.
- Determine the nature of the tasks for which the vehicle will be used and the environment in which it will be operating.
- Consider the safety features and accessories that are a priority given the operational requirements of the vehicle.
- Confirm the number of likely occupants and the seating capacity of the vehicle.
- Determine the load the vehicle is required to carry, including full fuel and water tanks, and the security of that load in the vehicle.
- Clarify the towing capability of the vehicle, including the total weight of the vehicle with passengers and fixed equipment such as bull-bars and winches.
- Check that the safety specification of the vehicle includes a combination of active and passive safety features to provide optimal safety for the vehicle occupants.
- Ensure that the level of crash protection provided for the occupants is not less than five star ANCAP rating for passenger and sports utility vehicles.<sup>24</sup>
- Confirm driver visibility to the sides and rear of the vehicle.
- Consider physical characteristics and capabilities of the drivers who will use the vehicle.
- Clarify driver licensing issues e.g. automatic transmission models only.
- Determine access and/or proximity to servicing dealerships.
- Check fuel availability.
- Ensure compliance with other government priorities e.g. emissions, utilisation.
- Consider the potential impact of the vehicle on other road users – e.g. the weight and size of vehicles.

<sup>24</sup>. See detailed comment regarding application of QFleet's mandatory minimum safety specification in the 'Select Safe Vehicles' section of this manual

## Inform and supervise drivers

Induction training for new employees performing work-related driving should cover the organisation's driver and vehicle safety policies and procedures.

A driver induction should include:

- legal obligations and awareness of issues relating to speed, fatigue, drugs and alcohol
- agency requirements, such as pre-journey checks and incident reports
- management of infringement and driver performance issues
- driving for adverse road conditions
- crash and emergency procedures
- record-keeping.

Induction is not only relevant to new employees, but also to those who move into positions with significant driving involved or with responsibility for a fleet (e.g. supervisors). Existing employees also benefit from the use of induction material to refresh their knowledge.

Agencies are encouraged to use information and resources available from the following sources and to incorporate these into induction and refresher training:

- Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q) fact sheets.<sup>25</sup>
- the Department of Transport and Main Roads Safety Page which includes an online interactive quiz and animated videos demonstrating the road rules.

In addition to induction or refresher training, a vehicle familiarisation brief may be provided for employees using a different type of vehicle. The handover should cover the safety features of the vehicle, basic operation and any individual adjustments for the driver (e.g. seats, steering wheel and mirrors).

More specialised training may be required for some fleets depending on the type of work and amount of driving involved. Training for special vehicles, such as 4WDs in rough terrain, may be required. Training for driving in adverse conditions may also be appropriate.

As part of the program to promote safe driving, the following information about vehicle and driver safety should be provided:

- information about driving hazards (e.g. impact of wet road conditions on safe following distances) – refer to the QFleet Rural and Remote Driving Fact Sheet
- agency specific, statistical information about crash risks (percentages of fleet vehicles involved in crashes) and reporting of crashes
- information about how drugs and alcohol affect driving (e.g. relationship between Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) levels and reaction times) – refer to the QFleet Fitness to Drive Fact Sheet
- information about the effect of medications on driving (e.g. impact of drowsiness on driving) – refer to the QFleet Fitness to Drive Fact Sheet
- information about fatigue and driving (e.g. how the body clock works) – refer to the QFleet Courteous and Safe Driving Behaviour Fact Sheet.

The QFleet website also provides a range of other driver safety fact sheets.

Direct supervision of drivers is rarely possible, so the emphasis must be on monitoring the procedures designed to reduce risks.

Supervisors need to respond to any incidents/ infringements, public complaints, feedback from drivers and issues raised in forums such as WHS committees or work group meetings.

In addition, supervisors need to actively promote safe driving and address any evidence of unsafe driving.

25. <http://www.carrsq.qut.edu.au/publications/corporate/#fact>.



## Plan trips to minimise risks

For regular driving journeys, planning can minimise risks. Time should always be allocated to account for travel as well as common delays, such as traffic and weather conditions.

If a safer route is available, then drivers should be instructed to use it.

Consideration should be given to using more appropriate alternatives such as public transport, taxis or technological options such as video conferencing.

The time allocated to reach a destination should not require the driver to not comply with road rules.

Work involving extended driving periods should have some built-in time to allow for rest breaks, changing conditions and traffic delays.

Trips using roads in poor condition and driving in extreme weather conditions should only be undertaken with the appropriate vehicles (e.g. 4WD vehicles where necessary) and by appropriately trained drivers.

The safe handling and storage of any luggage or equipment should be included in trip planning.

Where work-related equipment has to be loaded onto and removed from the vehicle, safe handling procedures should be followed.

All objects and equipment must be stowed in the boot, trailer or roof-racks. A station wagon or other vehicle with in-cabin storage area should not carry objects or equipment unless the vehicle is fitted with a cargo barrier.

All equipment should be secured to minimise damage and to ensure it does not become loose in transit.

Trip planning for remote areas or travel in extreme weather conditions should also include emergency response considerations, such as an assessment of the type of emergency equipment that may be required including first aid kits, emergency communications tools, protective equipment (e.g. reflective vests) and emergency contact numbers.

Drivers should never risk crossing flooded roads, regardless of their vehicle type, and should have an alternative route mapped in times of heavy rainfall.



A journey plan, including times of arrival at key locations, should be prepared and monitored by supervisors.

For more information refer to the following QFleet Fact Sheets: Journey Planning, Rural and Remote Driving, Vehicle First Aid Kits, and Driving in Bad Weather.



# WHS law and work-related driving safety

## Step 3: Monitor and review work-related driving safety

To remain effective, a vehicle and driver safety program needs to be monitored and regularly reviewed. Some matters, such as incidents, require an immediate response whereas others should be part of routine checks.

### Emergency response

In order to respond to driving related incidents, a basic emergency system could include:

- a suitable first aid kit and first aid training for those drivers in remote or rural locations or driving in hazardous conditions
- procedures for responding to a vehicle breakdown
- procedures for responding to a crash or related incident
- procedures for assisting others
- emergency contact numbers kept in the vehicle
- equipment such as reflective vests.

### Recovery and reporting

Following any incident, support should be provided to drivers and passengers who have been involved in or have witnessed a crash.

Depending on the severity of the incident, support may be provided through systems within the agency (e.g. Human Resources or WHS network) or through the use of professional counsellors (through an Employee Assistance Program) who can debrief and assist drivers and others involved.

Internal crash reports or incident forms should be completed and forwarded to the person responsible for investigating and taking follow-up action.

If there is a work related incident or accident, then it may be what is referred to as a 'notifiable incident' under the Work Health & Safety Act 2011. If you are unclear as to what

is a notifiable incident, refer to the Act or seek further advice.

If a notifiable incident occurs, then it needs to be reported to Work Health & Safety Qld, as it is a legal requirement. For additional information visit [worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://worksafe.qld.gov.au).

If appropriate, incidents should be investigated and immediate action taken to prevent future incidents.

Through their WHS policies or work-related safe driving policies, agencies may encourage the reporting of incidents related to work-related driving including matters other than crashes (e.g. a near miss or any incident that might have resulted in injury). These incidents can then be investigated as required.

### Investigation

Internal agency investigation of an incident should be undertaken and involve WHS representatives and employees, particularly in making recommendations to remedy the problems identified.

Incidents typically have multiple causes, and the focus should be on the circumstances that were responsible for the incident occurring.

### Routine monitoring

Determining whether the vehicle and driver safety prevention measures are working is essential if the work done in the planning steps is to be effective.

Routine monitoring includes inspection of vehicle checks and service records.

## Is the work-related driver safety program working?

- Are regular checks done of the licence status of drivers?
- Is driver training and education kept up to date and relevant records kept of this training?
- Does the driver training address the most frequent crash causes?
- Are vehicle checks performed and recorded and is action taken to fix problems?
- Are there records to show that reported vehicle defects have been fixed by qualified staff?
- Are vehicle services and associated records maintained?
- Are mechanisms in place to provide support to staff following a vehicle incident?
- Is there follow-up of incident investigations to make sure changes are made?
- Is safety equipment provided to drivers in remote and rural locations or those driving in hazardous conditions?
- Are work schedules monitored for fatigue risks?
- Are employees encouraged to report on the effectiveness of procedures?

## Review

A review of the operation of the vehicle and driver safety program should occur at least annually and more frequently for large fleets and those that have high levels of driving. Apart from the information provided by maintenance records, incident reports and vehicle checks, a review should seek feedback from drivers about issues that may impact on safety.

An agency review can be further informed by insurance data pertaining to the nature of crashes, the cost of vehicle crashes and other relevant information relating to claims specific to individual agencies. Fleet administrators can access data on the Client Access System (CAS) through the QFleet website.

Further detail with regard to the creation and use of these reports can be requested from QFleet through the

insurance broker.

Agencies may choose to benchmark certain data annually to determine the effectiveness of their work-related safe driving program.

## Compliance at a glance

The Office of Industrial Relations, WHSQ has developed a *Compliance at a Glance* checklist which agencies can use as a self-assessment tool for their WHS compliance. Agencies are encouraged to adopt this tool to also evaluate how well they are managing the risks associated with work related driving.

25. [https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/93312/compliance-at-a-glance-checklist.pdf](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/93312/compliance-at-a-glance-checklist.pdf)

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