

Subject: **SAFE DRIVING TIPS**

Earlier in the year we communicated the need to significantly reduce driving related accidents. A number of driving initiatives are going to be put in place to achieve this and a 'Driver Profiling Assessment' will be rolled out in the near future.

The reason we place such significance on avoidable vehicle accidents is because road related accidents present as much of a risk of injury to staff as the normal work activities. Driving requires the same high levels of concentration as operational work. A proportion of the vehicle accidents we have seen are clearly avoidable if we make a few simple changes to our daily driving routines.

Remember

- **When setting off from a junction or entering a roundabout whilst behind another vehicle** avoid the temptation to immediately follow the vehicle in front. Do not assume it will keep going – it may stop suddenly. Be patient! - allow the vehicle to clear your route before setting off
- **When turning into junctions** make sure your line of travel is clear of obstructions
- **Avoid reversing** altogether if possible, by planning routes to enable you to drive in and out in forward gears
- **Avoid reversing around corners** if possible by aligning your vehicle to allow any necessary reversing in a straight line
- **Before reversing** always make sure that you know what is behind and to the side of your vehicle. Get out and check if you are unsure. Where available use a second person to monitor and/or guide your movement
- **When reversing** keep your speed low. Be on the alert for pedestrians – especially children, and be prepared to stop quickly
- **When following behind another vehicle** always maintain a minimum "2 seconds gap" in dry weather and a "4 seconds gap" in wet weather, between your vehicle and the one in front
- **When stopping behind another vehicle** always leave a safe distance in front of you. You should be able to see the vehicle's rear tyres and at least 1 metre of tarmac

Additionally, the winter months are frantically approaching and that brings with it particularly hazardous driving conditions. More of us will be working and driving in the hours of darkness, and this needs to be taken into account when we consider the risks we may encounter.



In winter, it is even more important to check your vehicle is well maintained and serviced:

- keep your lights clean and additive to the windscreen washer bottles
- tyre grip is even more important in wintry weather, so check tread depth and pressure

Adjust your driving to the conditions:

Hail, heavy snow and rain reduce visibility:

- drive slowly, allowing extra room to slow down and stop
- avoid harsh braking and acceleration
- if you skid, ease off the accelerator but do not brake suddenly

Watch out for fog - it drifts rapidly and is often patchy:

- drive very slowly using dipped headlights, use fog lights if visibility is seriously reduced, but remember to switch them off when visibility improves;
- don't hang on to the tail lights of the vehicle in front - this gives you a false sense of security and means you may be driving too close
- don't speed up suddenly - even if it seems to be clearing you can suddenly find yourself back in thick fog

Winter sun:

- dazzle from winter sun can be dangerous - if it's too low for the visor it might be worth keeping a pair of sunglasses handy

****SAFE DRIVING****