



# DRIVER DISTRACTION

## Manager's Fact Sheet

### Why is this important?

Distraction is one of the most common causations of road traffic incidents both employers and employees have a responsibility to ensure a driver is not distracted. Distractions can be categorised as:

- Visual - "Rubber Necking", looking at a message on a device, reading roadside signs.
- Audio - Having in-depth discussions with crew members, being on a conference call.
- Manual - searching for an item in the cab area, looking through a device for information.
- Cognitive - "Daydreaming", thinking about a difficult next task/job, reflecting on recent conversations or situations.

Whilst the use of a mobile phone is legal whilst driving, employers and employees need to consider:

- Company policy – is the use of mobile devices prohibited whilst driving?
- Office based employees calling a driver – do they check if the driver is safe to speak?

It's not all about mobile devices. Simple day to day tasks carried out whilst driving can be a distraction, and companies should have policies in place to deal with the most common one's, e.g.

- Use of mobile devices – both for business and personal
- Smoking
- Carrying or passengers and pets
- Headphones and ear plugs

Not abiding by the rules has consequences, both internal (company/HR policy), and external (the Law). Distraction can lead a driver non-compliance with the most basic of road traffic rules, e.g.

- Traffic light signals
- Speeding
- Vulnerable Road Users



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### Why is this important? *(continued)*

Failure to comply can result in company policy being implemented and for more serious instances driving penalties and fines, can lead to a driver being banned from driving, or a company being prosecuted for failing to ensure drivers do not become distracted whilst driving due to their work. Distraction in a driving environment has many consequences.

- Workflow PDA's can be used for multi tasks, one with Sat Nav ability, but also showing workflow and messages can create distractions.
- Dash Cams and CCTV are commonplace, and results of distracted driving can be captured and made public in minutes.
- Not forgetting brand image
- Pre driving tasks such as load security, pre use checks, or securing loading equipment can be missed because of distraction.

### What are the legal requirements?

Regulations under the Road Traffic Act, can apply to the result of a Distraction offence, with the severity increasing with the results, these include:

- Dangerous Driving
- Careless and Inconsiderate Driving
- Failure to Be in Proper Control of the Vehicle
- Driving without Due Care and Attention

Penalties can be imposed against the employee (driver) and employer should they be found to have contributed to, or not have had policies and procedures in place to prevent such incidents. Drivers should be aware of the consequences. Penalties range from:

- Up to 6 penalty points on a driver's licence
- A fixed penalty notice of up to £200
- A fine of up to £1000, or £2500 for an HGV/Bus driver
- In the more serious cases a driving ban – with increased risk of loss of licence if the driver has passed their driving test within 2 years.



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### What is best practice?

- Employers should have policies and procedures in place to ensure employees understand their responsibilities. Policies should be clear on use of mobile devices and other equipment that an employee could need to use in their role, which could be classed as a distraction whilst driving.
- Policies around driving for business should be issued to and understood by drivers. They should include, both company and legal requirements, for the use of both business and personal equipment whilst driving.
- Reporting systems should be in place for not only first use checks, accident reporting, but they should include near miss incidents as data from these reports and other telemetry/fleet data can help highlight areas of risk.
- The culture of a company influences behaviours, risk, an employee's workload, and the ability to work safely. This can impact their safety as well as other road users.
- Support should be available through company to support an employee if an issue is detected.
- Implementing and working to a work check list will assist employees keeping to a routine, helping to minimise distractions.

### Where can I find further information?

[www.rospa.com/media/documents/road-safety/driver-distraction-factsheet.pdf](http://www.rospa.com/media/documents/road-safety/driver-distraction-factsheet.pdf)

[www.gov.uk/using-mobile-phones-when-driving-the-law](http://www.gov.uk/using-mobile-phones-when-driving-the-law)

[A34 Incident- use of mobile device - WARNING](#)

[www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/resources/search-results/?search=distraction](http://www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/resources/search-results/?search=distraction)

[www.endsleigh.co.uk/blog/post/what-you-need-to-know-about-distracted-driving/](http://www.endsleigh.co.uk/blog/post/what-you-need-to-know-about-distracted-driving/)