

Accidents and Incidents: Management Briefing

Road workers include people working in traffic management and incident support services, maintenance and renewal schemes, vehicle recovery and any other activities where live traffic is present. Work can include:

- salting and snow clearance during the winter
- emergency repairs after accidents and incidents
- maintaining the condition of fences, barriers and road markings
- resurfacing and repairs to the road surface
- building new carriageways
- cutting grass at junctions and central reservations
- clearing drainage systems
- clearance of litter
- replacing bulbs on street lamps.

Did you know?

- In the ten years to 2012, 13 road workers were killed while working on motorways and major A roads in England.

- 80% of road workers have been physically or verbally abused by motorists.

Controlling the risks

It is key that risks are managed and controlled.

- Working at night: If you work at night you must receive an induction, understand who you report to and what to do in the event of an emergency. All working areas should be well lit, signposted and have clear vehicle and pedestrian segregation. Excessive night work is restricted by The Working Time Regulations. Night workers' normal hours of work must not exceed an average of eight hours for each 24 hours and employers must take reasonable steps to ensure the limit is complied with. This may be averaged over 17 weeks. If the work involves special hazards or heavy physical or mental strain, night workers must not work for more than eight hours in any 24 hour period during which the night worker undertakes night work

- Working on or next to the carriageway: It is essential that you are trained to work on or near roads. You should understand how you can do your job safely, how to use any personal protective equipment (PPE), how to safely and effectively use any work equipment, and how any traffic management plans work. You must understand all signage and the rules of the traffic flow. You must be aware of what to do in an emergency and who to report any incidents to

- Crossing the carriageway: When crossing carriageways of highspeed roads, workers should:
 - 1) wear appropriate PPE
 - 2) make sure they can see and be seen by oncoming traffic
 - 3) ensure they can estimate appropriate safe gaps in the traffic
 - 4) stand 1.2m away from the edge of the live road before starting to cross
 - 5) only cross if there is a safe gap in the traffic
 - 6) walk straight across the road, they should not run or zig zag between lanes
 - 7) avoid cats eyes and other tripping hazards
 - 8) carry signs, etc so as to minimise the risk of dropping them
 - 9) try not to display the front of signs to oncoming traffic
 - 10) not obscure their high-visibility clothing
 - 11) move to a place of safety after crossing, at least 1.2m from the live road edge or protected by safety fences/cones
 - 12) take care when moving equipment so as not to endanger themselves or others

What is reportable?

Remember: Greater crossing times should be allowed in poor weather and when carrying loads. Greater distances should be allowed at night and where traffic speeds/crossing times are high

- Working around moving vehicles: Vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists must be safely segregated in a traffic management plan. This should include information about traffic flow including signs, signals and markings, lighting, roundabouts, junctions and one-way systems, traffic calming devices, speed limits etc. New workers, visitors and contractors must all be made aware of the traffic management system before work starts
- Abuse from road users: You must report any abuse to your manager. Abuse can be verbal or physical and may be from colleagues or road users. Road users may ignore speed limits and drive through road works too fast causing accidents or near misses. You should inform your management of any incidents
- Working in poor visibility/bad weather: Lighting and PPE as well as reflectors and cat's eyes are important to ensure that people are seen and can see hazards around them. By law there should be adequate lighting of site locations and vehicles at all times to enable all persons to work safely and in safety. Glare from the sun can also be a hazard and sun visors may be needed. If you are unsure about your PPE and if it is adequate you should always discuss this with your manager
- Using vehicles and equipment: Vehicles and all equipment should be safe to use, which means they need to be regularly inspected by a competent person. However before operating a vehicle you should always consider if the following are in good working order: mirrors, vision aids, sensing devices, horns, lights, reflectors, reversing lights, parking brakes, seatbelts, any guards to prevent access to dangerous areas of the vehicle. You should also consider your ability to drive the vehicle. Do you have the correct training, knowledge and experience? Can you safely access and exit the vehicle? Are the surfaces you are going to be driving on in safe order? Will you be protected if the vehicle overturns?

Identifying the risks

Risks may include:

- working at night
- working on or next to the carriageway
- crossing the carriageway
- working around moving vehicles
- abuse from road users
- working in poor visibility/bad weather
- using vehicles and plant equipment.

Disclaimer

These example Director's Briefings are provided by Hettle Andrews for general guidance on matters of interest. In making these documents available to a general and diverse audience it is not possible to anticipate the requirements or the hazards of any subscriber's business. Users are therefore advised to carefully evaluate the contents. Hettle Andrews does not accept any liability whatsoever for injury, damage or other losses which may arise from reliance on this information and the use of these documents.

Copyright of these documents remains with Hettle Andrews and whilst subscribers are permitted to make use of them for their own purposes, permission is not granted for resale of the intellectual property to third parties.