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**IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH VAN DRIVERS AND MANAGERS OF VAN DRIVERS**

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## Executive summary

### Background

Over the last ten years, the number of vans<sup>1</sup> in the UK has increased by around a third and van traffic by 40%, reaching 54,000 million vehicle kilometres in 2003. Of approximately 32 million vehicles registered in the UK in 2004, approximately 3 million were vans (goods vehicles with a van body and a gross weight of up to 7.5 tonnes). This equalled 9.5% of the total vehicle population in the UK.

Minimal restrictions with regard to working time and licensing requirements for vans under 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight mean that vans can be used very flexibly and can be operated by a workforce that, compared to, for example, licence requirements for heavy goods vehicles, does not have to be specifically trained. It also means that the management of the risks associated with operating vans is predominantly left to the van user's discretion.

Data from two DfT surveys on privately-owned (single person named as the owner) as well as company-owned vans indicates that 83% and 93% respectively of all vehicle kilometres are work-related. The same surveys also show that vans are frequently used as work vehicles for tradesmen in the construction business, and in wholesale and retail. Increased use of vans in recent years has particularly affected courier, express and mail services as well as goods delivery industries. Growth in home shopping is one important reason for this development. Total home deliveries in the UK accounted for £28.3 billion in 2001, rising to £34.7 billion in 2003 and are expected to reach £42 billion in 2006.

Despite the increasing importance of vans in the UK economy and a recently emerging focus of governmental bodies on work-related road safety, there is little systematic knowledge of how van drivers and managers of companies with van fleets operate or what their attitudes towards road safety are. TRL was therefore commissioned by the AA Motoring Trust to undertake a qualitative study with van users and managers of van fleets.

### Methodology

A total of 22 in-depths interviews were carried out with five groups of van users:

- Employed dedicated van drivers (6)
- Employed tradesmen driving vans (6)
- Self-employed dedicated van drivers (5)
- Self-employed tradesmen driving vans (1)
- Managers of employed dedicated van drivers or of tradesmen driving vans (4).

The aims of the qualitative study were to:

- Investigate what the important issues around driving vans for work purposes are
- Investigate what different businesses currently do to ensure van driver safety.
- Explore the attitudes towards vans
- Explore the factors influencing the decision for a particular van type/model in the purchase process.

The majority of participating companies were small or medium companies. Participants came from a variety of industry sectors; companies fell into three main groups, 'delivery of goods', 'construction, demolition and removal' and 'miscellaneous'.

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<sup>1</sup> The DfT statistics quoted here refer to vans not exceeding 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight in the private and light goods taxation class with van body types.

### **Employed dedicated van drivers**

The group of employed professional van drivers comprised courier drivers of small or medium sized companies. The majority of these drivers were unaware or uncertain of the existence of a written safety policy in their company, but reported the existence of company rules on alcohol and drugs use or mobile phone use. Many felt that driver safety was always secondary to profit making. Drivers felt that they were not up to date with current legislation and guidance on driving and were not provided with information by their managers.

Regular driving license checks as well as vehicle checks were carried out more frequently in this group than any other. Vans were typically allocated on a fixed basis to the drivers, who in most of the cases were also financially responsible for any damage to the van. Inductions to van driving were extensive for companies with fixed route deliveries, but non-existent or minimal in all other cases. Further training was not provided in any of the companies and only one participant reported regular driving assessments.

Time pressure when driving at work characterised this participant group. Work schedules were perceived to be planned without regard for their practicality and frequently did not include regular rest or lunch breaks. Instances of fatigue were frequent, even though only one driver reported to drive at night time. Most drivers expected reprimands from their managers for cancelling a trip due to fatigue. None of the companies had safe-driving incentives or driver health checks in place.

### **Employed tradesmen**

The group of employed tradesmen driving vans for work was very heterogeneous regarding the size of the companies they worked for (ranging from small to large), their work patterns (including night shifts), the van use (same van on a fixed basis versus driving pool vehicles), and their knowledge of driver safety provisions made by their company. Most drivers were uncertain if their company had a written safety policy or carried out regular driving license checks. Interviewees from small companies did not feel they were up to date with relevant information on driving at work; employees of larger companies trusted that their managers would inform them when necessary. Regular vehicle inspection by the driver was required in all companies, but was predominantly carried out on a 'now and again' basis.

In comparison with the dedicated drivers, participants had considerably more control over their work schedules and workload. There were no time pressures or financial losses associated with being late for an appointment. Driver fatigue, however, was frequently mentioned in this group, mainly in connection with shift work at night. Participants mostly felt that their managers were supportive and understanding and would not require their employees to drive when unfit.

There were no driver inductions in most companies, and no provision of further driver training in any of them. Informal driver assessments were only reported by one interviewee. Most of the companies in this group participated in the 'How's my driving' scheme.

The group was characterised by predominantly neutral attitudes towards the work vans and the installation of more comfort features were most sought after. Most of the tradesmen reported that they would not want to use a van for private motoring purposes.

Changes of their current work van most frequently related to the desire for more comfort; however, most drivers' satisfaction with their vans was high, and there was a preference for vans as private motoring vehicles for the majority of interviewees.

### **Self-employed dedicated drivers**

Only one self-employed dedicated driver could be recruited to participate in the interviews; this can be attributed to their relatively small number in the UK and the economic pressures that they are working under. The interviewee reported to run all aspects of his business on his own and reported to spread his work portfolio to guarantee a steady influx of work. As the reputation of being reliable and safe was crucial for his business success, he did all the driving himself. The maintenance of the work vans was extremely thorough, driven by considerations of profitability.

No safety policy or formal risk assessments were in place, which the driver attributed to the size of his business. Driving at work was not time-critical and the interviewee reported planning journeys prior to departure and using a navigation system.

The self-employed dedicated driver's attitude to his vans was extremely positive as he regarded them as the pillars of his business.

### **Self-employed tradesmen**

The group of self-employed tradesmen was the most homogeneous of all groups interviewed. The participants worked in the construction business together with a partner and sometimes sub-contractors, but mostly no employees. Work patterns were alike (typically 8am to 5pm) and participants preferred to work locally. None of the interviewees had a written safety policy or a risk assessment system in relation with driving in place. Most interviewees did not see the need for such systems as they felt that they were safe drivers with good common sense. Maintenance schemes for the work vans were predominantly poor.

Speeding was often reported and played down, even though there was no time pressure. Participants reported a strong feeling of responsibility to keep agreed times and a wish to positively represent their company. Safe driving requirements were not communicated to subcontractors. Participants did not proactively seek information to ensure their competence in managing occupational road risk, and instead relied on mainstream media.

Attitudes towards vans ranged from regarding them as workhorses to affection for them. Preferred changes to the vans included the wish for better visibility (including reversing) as well as the fitting of comfort features. The majority of the interviewees preferred cars to vans with regard to private motoring.

### **Managers of van driving employees**

Two managers of employees driving vans at work worked for large companies and two worked for small companies. Only the large company had written safety policies in place which covered driving. The small courier company wrote safe driving rules into employees' employment contracts and the manager of a small food delivery company felt that safe driving was sufficiently covered by existing legislation. Risk assessment systems varied greatly between the four companies, especially in the smallest company where they tended to be carried out in a rather informal way.

### **Comparison of managers' and drivers' interviews**

The comparison between managers' and drivers' interviews brought out a lack of support for work-related road safety measures through the senior management in the energy providing company. Drivers were often unaware of the existence of systems, thus demonstrating a lack of successful top-down communication. With regard to bottom-up communication, fatigue or parking fines, which were perceived as serious problems by the drivers, did not seem to be appreciated sufficiently by the managers. Driver assessments were not carried out, as both managers and drivers regarded driving as a 'voluntary activity' and not 'work'.

In a small courier company, communication channels were much shorter and there was strong overlap between the statements of the logistics manager and the driver. The logistics manager who also planned the drivers' workload understood the performance limitation of drivers and planned workload accordingly. Due to a fixed client base, the company had fixed delivery routes and the induction to these routes requires two weeks of shadowing. Unfit drivers were removed from driving for the duration of their unfitness without negative consequences to them. Driver performance was monitored through biannual driver assessments and staff turnover was lower than typical for the business.

A small food delivery company worked without any formalised procedures and with the help of friends and family members. Driving was regarded as a predominantly 'private activity'. Managing occupational road risk was regarded as an additional, potentially costly task that might put small companies out of business. The company had fixed delivery routes and new drivers were inducted through shadowing experienced drivers for two weeks. The manager also worked as relief driver and

had a good understanding of how many deliveries could be made per shift. There were no time pressures on the deliveries. The employment of part-time drivers also guaranteed back-up drivers who could take over if a driver was too tired to drive or ill. Maintenance of the van was regarded as crucial to ensure reliable deliveries.

### **Discussion and conclusions**

The in-depth interviews produced a wealth of information on the requirements and current practice and van preferences of different businesses. Characteristics of different driver groups were identified. As with all data from self-report, the researcher has limited control over interviewee honesty and caution has to be exercised over social desirability bias.

There was limited awareness across all groups of what effective management of work-related road risk entails, particularly in the following areas:

- Medical driver fitness
- Driver training and assessment
- Safety culture and communication.

None of the companies had driving related medical fitness checks in place. Even though some of the participants reported sophisticated induction procedures, training in the majority of cases did not include important issues such as loading, effects of load on vehicle handling, driving in different weather conditions or human factors such as stress (and how to cope with it). Frequent uncertainty between employed van drivers when asked about standard procedures and documents in their company indicated that the communication of safety issues through management was either unsuccessful or absent. Self-employed van users often felt that working on their own absolved them from managing occupational road risk and felt they were safe drivers, even if their behaviour indicated otherwise.

Further issues that frequently emerged across groups included

- Use of mobile phones when driving
- Speeding
- Frequent instances of fatigue.

Approaches to tackling these issues differed considerably between companies and individuals. Whereas some interviewees felt that legislation provided sufficient regulations with regard to mobile phone use, others reported that their companies provided hands-free kits and issued explicit rules about the phones use when driving for work. A considerable proportion of interviewees reported using a mobile phone whilst driving at their own discretion, when they felt it to be safe. Similar behaviour was reported for speeding, which was often belittled or justified by time pressure. Reports of fatigue were frequent between drivers and the ways of dealing with it ranged from stopping for a nap to carrying on driving. Managers' reactions were reported to be equally varied: some managers would accommodate for tiredness and remove the driver from his duty, whereas others did not accept fatigue as a reason to cease driving.

Small companies compared to larger ones tended to have less formalised systems in place and expressed a concern that a planned approach towards managing occupational road risk would be an additional workload that might threaten their business. In small companies, managers would fill a variety of roles and reported having limited time for proactive information search. Small companies had advantages over larger companies as the frequent contact between manager and employees and the shorter communication channels meant that managers knew more about drivers' personal background and could spot problems, e.g. drug or alcohol abuse more easily.

All participants chose 'fit for purpose' as their main determinant for van purchase decisions and thus confirmed vans to be work vehicles. Interviewees who drove the same van on a fixed basis expressed more satisfaction with their vans and took better care of them compared to those participants driving different vans from a vehicle fleet. Overall the attitude towards vans as work vehicles was



predominantly positive. The perception of the van was predominantly one of a workhorse. Most vans featured a limited number of primary and secondary safety features. To identify robust trends between different user groups a bigger sample and a quantitative methodology would be needed.

The present qualitative study has provided a first indication of characteristics of different groups of van drivers, and has also pointed out that there is great variability between organisations and individuals using vans for work. The next step would be on the basis of these findings to investigate the prevalence of these characteristics and van driver groups with a representative sample of drivers, e.g. by means of a postal survey. A quantitative approach could demonstrate the prevalence of the issues around van driving identified in the qualitative study, such as mobile phone use, incidents of fatigue or medical fitness problems. In-depth accident studies could be carried out using contributory factors information and details collected 'at the scene' to understand the causes and circumstances surrounding accidents involving vans. To develop sensible policies and tailored road safety interventions for van users the knowledge of the extent of the problem, of how organisations or individual van drivers work, what particular information they need and how it should be presented is essential. What this study has demonstrated is the need for raising awareness of occupational road safety issues in organisations and individuals using vans for work.



## 1 Introduction

Over the last ten years, the number of vans<sup>2</sup> in the UK has increased by around a third and van traffic by 40%, reaching 54000 million vehicle kilometres in 2003 (DfT, 2005). Of approximately 32 million vehicles registered in the UK in 2004, approximately 3 million were vans (goods vehicles with a van body and with a gross weight of up to 7.5 tonnes). This equalled 9.5% of the total vehicle population in the UK (DfT, 2004).

Vans up to a gross vehicle weight of up to 3.5 tonnes are exempt from the EU Road Transport Directive (3820/85/EEC) and are not required to monitor driving hours with a tachograph. It is these vans that the following report will focus on. As commercial vehicles without O-licence requirements, vans up to 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight can de facto opt out of stringent working time restrictions and break requirements in the Working Time (Amendment) Regulation 2003. The minimal restrictions with regard to working time and minimal requirements with regard to licensing requirements mean that vans can be used very flexibly and can be operated by a workforce that, compared e.g. to licence requirements for heavy goods vehicles, does not have to be specifically trained. It also means that the management of the risks associated with operating vans is predominantly left to the van user's discretion.

But who uses vans for work purposes? Two surveys carried out in 2003 on behalf of the DfT (DfT, 2003a, 2003b) differentiated ownership in the following way: if the owner was on DVLA records as a company (Messrs.), the van counted as company-owned, if the owner was a single person (e.g. Mr. Dr., etc), the van counted as privately owned. The ratio for company versus privately owned vans in 2003 was approximately 58% (company-owned) to 42% privately owned vans. However, as small or one-man-businesses often operate vans, only a small fraction of the 42% of privately owned vans will be "truly" private vans used for private motoring purposes or leisure activities. This is reflected in the purpose of van use in the 2003 surveys on van activity: 83% of all vehicle kilometres are business/work related in privately owned vans and 93% of all vehicle kilometres are business/work related in company-owned vans.

According to the DfT van surveys, vans are frequently used as work vehicles for tradesmen and in the construction business, but also in wholesale and retail (DfT 2003a, 2003b & 2005). There has been an increase in the use of vans by courier, express and mail services and in company delivery services over the last few years. Growth in home shopping is one important reason for this development. Total home deliveries in the UK accounted for £28.3 billion in 2001, rising to £34.7 billion in 2003 and are expected to reach £42 billion in 2006 (Van User, 2005).

Despite the increasing importance of vans in the UK economy and a recently emerging focus of governmental bodies on work-related road safety, there is little systematic knowledge of how van drivers and managers of companies with van fleets operate or what their attitudes towards road safety are. After having carried out a literature review on van use in the UK which encompassed statistics on van use and accidents in the UK, the legislative framework and other issues such as van safety, TRL was commissioned by the AA Motoring Trust to undertake a qualitative study with van users and managers of van fleets. In-depths interviews were carried out with four groups of van users:

- Employed dedicated van drivers
- Employed tradesmen
- Self-employed van drivers and
- Self-employed tradesmen.

Additionally, managers of companies with work vans were interviewed to be able to contrast their views with the views of their drivers.

The aims of the qualitative study were to:

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<sup>2</sup> The DfT statistics quoted here refer to vans not exceeding 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight in the private and light goods taxation class with van body types.

- Investigate what the important issues around driving vans for work purposes are
- Determine what different businesses currently do to ensure van driver safety.

Furthermore, the interviews aimed at:

- Exploring the attitudes towards vans and
- Investigating the factors influencing the decision for a particular van type/model.

The qualitative research techniques are particularly useful for eliciting opinions and identifying important issues as they allow in-depth exploration.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Design of the study

Four groups of van drivers were used in the qualitative study (Table 1).

**Table 1: Van driver groups for qualitative interviews (number of participants).**

	Self-employed	Employed
Dedicated van driver	1	6
Tradesmen using the van as a work tool	5	6

Drivers of hired vans were excluded from participation in the study as it was felt that they are a very heterogeneous group. Recruiting of participants was predominantly focused on local firms and businesses (South-England area).

It had been initially planned to carry out focus groups to investigate van drivers' views, however, it quickly became clear that this procedure would exclude particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from participation. These small and medium firms and businesses were found to have only limited time they could spare for the study; they needed maximum flexibility in incorporating participation in the study with their daily work schedules. For this reason the focus groups were replaced with one-to-one in-depth interviews. These had the benefits of a) reducing the effort for the participants as a TRL interviewer could visit them at a convenient location, b) reducing the duration for each participant (instead of a 2 hours focus group an interview took on average 50 minutes), whilst c) maximising the information obtained from each interviewee through the structured interview process (compared to a focus group, where the equal allocation of speaking time between participants is more difficult).

For each group the recruitment of 4 to 6 participants had been envisaged, aiming at a maximum total of 24 drivers. The actual number of participants for each group is shown in Table 1. The recruitment of more than one dedicated self-employed driver was unsuccessful despite considerable effort and thus the total number of obtained driver interviews was 18.

In addition to this, 4 interviews with the managers of employed van drivers were carried out. Thus comparisons between managers' and drivers' perspectives within the same company were possible.

As no selection of particular industry sectors or company sizes was required for the study, the variety of business sectors was considerable but could be grouped into the larger categories:

- Delivery of goods (7 companies)
- Construction, demolition and removal (5 companies)
- Miscellaneous (e.g. cleaning, printing, energy provision etc.) (7 companies)

Categorisation of participating companies according to size demonstrated an over-representation of small and medium companies which reflects the true circumstances in the UK. There were:

- 4 companies with more than 1000 employees UK wide
- 2 companies with between 50 and 200 employees UK wide
- 8 companies with between 5 and 50 employees UK wide
- 5 companies with less than 5 employees UK wide.

## **2.2 Participant recruitment**

Participants were recruited employing the following techniques:

- By telephone through the yellow pages
- Through web-based road safety newsletters, leaflets and transport magazines
- By use of existing TRL contacts with companies with vans
- Through TRL personal contacts
- By on-street recruitment.

In one company, which had expressed an interest in participation, a group of eighteen shift workers participated in the study. To accommodate this, employees were asked to fill in questionnaires individually and afterwards participated in a group discussion on the risks associated with driving vans for work. The summary of the issues raised are reported as part of section 3.2. For the purpose of the main analysis (and in Table 1) this group is considered as one participant.

Prior to the interview each participant was briefed on the purpose of the study and the project sponsor. Interviewees were asked for their consent to tape-record the interviews for transcription purposes and were assured that their contributions to the study would be anonymised when reported to the AA Motoring Trust.

## **2.3 Interview**

Three in-depth interview guides (see appendix) were developed for the different groups in the study to account for the differences in the nature of the work tasks and employment status:

- For employed van drivers (including dedicated van drivers or tradesmen)
- For self-employed van drivers (including dedicated van drivers or tradesmen)
- For managers of van drivers.

The three guides were agreed within the AA Motoring Trust. They each encompassed three sections:

1. A section on work/company background
2. A section on the management of work-related road risk, including the following subsections:
  - Management and systems
  - Journey planning and information provision
  - Driver workload and fitness
  - Driver competence and training
  - Safety culture
  - Crime and driver safety
3. A section on features of work-vans

The time allocation for the different sections (assuming that each interview lasted 50 minutes), was as follows:

- Introduction: 5 minutes
- Background of interviewee: 10 minutes
- Management of occupational road risk: 20 minutes
- Van features: 15 minutes.

The interview guides included predominantly open ended questions. These were complemented by prompts so that the interviewer could specifically ask for particular work practices or arrangements if the interviewee did not come up with an answer himself, thus ensuring that issues were fully explored.

All interviews were transcribed for the analysis of the findings. Quotations of what the participants said have been integrated into the report in italic.

## 3 Results

### 3.1 Employed dedicated van drivers

#### 3.1.1 Background information

Details on all companies in this group are summarised in Table 2. Four of the six employed dedicated van drivers who took part in the van study worked as delivery drivers of courier companies. The transported goods included letters, parcels, packages or boxes of documents. Two more participants delivered goods (food versus TVs) to customers. All of the companies that the drivers worked for were small (up to 50 employees) or medium enterprises (50 to 150 employees) with van fleets of up to 80 vehicles. The drivers worked (with the exception of the food delivery driver, who was part-time employed) full-time and were, if they needed to, allowed to use the vans for private purposes on at least a one-off basis, e.g. to move furniture, if not regularly. Working time differed considerably between the drivers. Some drivers started early in the morning and had a regular 8 hours work day, one courier driver worked regular twelve hours shifts and another had alternating day and night shifts between 5.30am and 12pm. For the courier drivers, working time would vary according to the delivery location, e.g. a courier normally operating in the South-England area drove additional hours when he had to make a London delivery round. On such occasion, the daily mileage would increase from 120 miles per day to 200 miles. The greatest distance he reported to have driven had been from South-England to Sheffield and back in one day.

Work duties typically included the loading of the van at the beginning of the work day, e.g. with pallets or parcels. The driver would then start the delivery round. For this purpose some drivers reported to get the delivery route with the drop off points in a fixed order, whereas other drivers would schedule the order of the deliveries themselves. For the drivers working in food delivery, document storage and parcel delivery, the daily routes often stayed the same as a result of repeated business. The UK-wide operating courier driver and the TV delivery driver always delivered to new locations.

Only the drivers of the two bigger courier companies reported that their company employed agency drivers on a regular basis. One of these drivers had worked for the company as an agency driver before being permanently employed. He remarked that *the only criterion for employing a driver was a driving licence, whereas good driving didn't really seem to come in*. A third courier company used agency drivers, but found them less effective than the regular drivers due to the lack of familiarity with the delivery routes. The fourth company had a very low staff turnover or sickness absence and did not require agency drivers. Both goods delivery companies did not use agency drivers, a) because the feedback on agency drivers within the franchise had not been good and b) because the jobs

required additional skills on top of the driving (customer care, knowledge of delivered food products, installation of delivered TVs).

The number of drops per day differed considerably between the employed dedicated drivers. The television delivery driver reported the smallest number, with 8-10 deliveries (and even less if the televisions also had to be installed), the document storage courier made 12 drops and the food delivery driver reported the highest number with 90-100 drops per day.

**Table 2: Background information provided by employed dedicated van drivers.**

Role	Industry sector	No. of employees	Van model(s) at work	Private use allowed	Ownership	Working time
Delivery & installation of televisions	Electrical Appliances	5	Citroen long wheel base 2.2 HDI	Yes	Leased	9am-5.30pm
Food delivery driver	Food	8	Mercedes, Ford Transit	Yes	Company-owned	7.30am-4pm
Courier Driver	Delivery of parcels, letters, packages	30	Ford Transit	No	Leased	7.30am-7pm
Courier driver	Document storage/ warehousing	35	Ford Transit	Yes	6 vans company-owned, 6 leased	7.30am-4pm
Courier driver	Overnight collection of packages	100	Ford Transit	Yes	Leased	5.30am-12pm (shifts)
Courier driver	UK wide courier service	150	Ford Transit	Yes	Company-owned	12-8pm

### 3.1.2 Managing work-related road risk

#### 3.1.2.1 Management and systems

Participants were asked what immediately came to their minds when thinking about work-related road risk. Answers included *the safety of the van, e.g. tyres or the risks associated with driving in general and the expectation that other road users sometimes do stupid things, which means that one has to expect to be involved in an accident.* Another courier driver mentioned traffic on the road; *yes, one would speed, and yes, sometimes one would use his mobile phone, but he wouldn't worry about it, as these were the risks he would take. Whilst his company would expect drivers to use seatbelts and high-visibility jackets, this would not always be adhered to. But if he would get into trouble, it would be his own fault.*

Only one of the employed dedicated drivers knew for certain that his company had a written safety policy that covered van driving. When asked for its contents he said *it encompassed the usual stuff such as behave yourself and be courteous and respectful to other road users.* All other drivers were at best uncertain if there was a written safety policy in their company. Some remembered to have agreed

to a set of safety-rules and work conditions when signing their work contract; however none of the drivers could say what exactly these rules had encompassed. When prompted for company rules on alcohol, driving time or mobile phone use, most of the drivers reported the existence of such rules. A courier driver, e.g. reported that even though the vans were fitted with hands free kits, drivers would receive a warning if they were caught answering the phone whilst driving. Another courier driver reported that he was not supposed to use his mobile whilst driving, but used it despite this rule. The food delivery driver remarked that even though his company did not have explicit safety rules, a lot was covered by the Road Traffic Act, including mobile phone use and consumption of alcohol. His delivery van was not fitted with a hands-free mobile and he admitted to using the mobile phone whilst driving on straight dual carriageways if there was no appropriate place to stop the vehicle. He claimed to *use the phone, but not on small roads* and to *use his common sense*. Two drivers reported that drivers in their company were issued with hand-held mobile phones. There was no explicit company rule about their use. All drivers were expected to be contactable at work. None of the companies that the drivers worked for had random alcohol or drug checks in place.

Most drivers were not sure if their managers carried out risk assessments on driving at work, including the

1. vans
2. drivers and
3. journeys.

Two courier drivers reported that the transport manager checked the vans, including tyres, brake lights, indicators, windscreen wipers and mileage regularly. If the vehicle was found to be unsafe, it was taken off the road and replaced with another van. The document storage courier driver believed that his manager carried out risk assessments on the premises as the company had frequent audits of Health and Safety systems, but did not think that these extended to the road. His company, however, was the only one that had regular driving assessments through a qualified driving assessor in place. None of the companies reported that risk assessments of journeys were carried out.

Drivers were asked what driving-related information the company management required documentation of. Most drivers reported that mileage, fuel consumption, accidents, incidents, driving time, parking tickets and penalty points were monitored in their company. Fines for speeding or parking had to be paid by the drivers themselves in all but the document storage company. However, only one courier driver considered parking to be a serious problem and said that *one had to know the local traffic wardens and police to get the job done*. The television delivery driver also mentioned parking as a problem, as the time required for the installation of televisions did not allow him to park on double yellow lines. Two companies had tracking devices built into their vans which could be used to contest parking tickets that had been unlawfully issued (if the actual parking duration was under 20 minutes).

Some drivers did not know if their company had a specific accident procedure in place and had never been involved in an accident whilst driving at work. They assumed that in the case of an accident, they would exchange details with the other driver(s) involved in the accident and would pass these details together with an accident report on to their manager. Two courier drivers reported to have been involved in accidents at work. One of these drivers had been involved in a fatigue accident with a truck on the motorway, resulting in extensive van damage- a replacement van was required to carry out the delivery. The other driver had caused two accidents at T-junctions where he did not pay enough attention to the traffic coming from his right. His company had a standard accident procedure, which included exchanging details with the other driver(s), filling in an accident report form and taking pictures of the scene. In this interviewee's company, every van was equipped with a camera to take pictures of the accident. The camera had been a requirement of the insurance company. Only one other driver reported to have a standardised accident procedure and a camera.

Daily or weekly vehicle checks of fluids and tyre pressure were expected from all drivers in all companies; however, not all drivers adhered to this requirement and the majority of companies did not monitor the performance of van checks through the drivers. One driver, for example, reported to only



check tyres, water and oil twice a year. The document storage company was the only company to use a van check list at the beginning of each work day with the driver ticking off coolant, tyre pressure etc. Courier drivers who had been allocated a van that they were driving every day were frequently financially responsible for dents and scratches in the van as well as for keeping it clean. These drivers took great care of their vans, carried out a daily walk-around and stated they wanted to *keep shiny things shiny*. Their transport managers would assess the state of the vehicle at regular intervals and would also arrange further maintenance of the vans, e.g. booking them in for a service.

### 3.1.2.2 Journey planning and information provision

The employed drivers reported that supervisors, managers or control staff were responsible for the setting of work schedules. In the courier industry these schedules were (with the exception of the document storage company) reported to be tight. Comments such as *I think if you ask any courier driver, there are not enough hours in the day, you are encouraged to get the job done as quickly as possible* or *"I can't do it" is not really an option when being asked to do a job* indicated a high time pressure in this particular industry. One of the courier drivers reported that he often drives for eight hours with no breaks as the company did not build breaks into the schedules. He would have lunch while he was driving and would only have a break if the load he was expected to pick up was not ready. Whereas he thought that the installation of tachographs in vans under 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight would be going too far, he was in favour of planning regular rest breaks into the work schedules. Similar conditions, including the frequent absence of lunch breaks and doing unpaid overtime to complete the deliveries, were reported by another courier driver. Driving schedules in the food delivery company were planned by the company manager who also worked as a relief driver if one of the regular drivers was ill, thus this participant knew how many drops could realistically be fitted into a route. For the television delivery driver, driving schedules were set by the management, however, without particular regard for their practicality.

When asked what information drivers received prior to undertaking their journeys, the food delivery company reported to have fixed routes and new drivers were trained on these routes by experienced drivers before starting to deliver themselves. For new clients, the drivers received map printouts of the appropriate postcode area and were encouraged to ask locals for the way; all vans were additionally equipped with road maps. All other drivers reported to receive the delivery addresses with postcode for new clients and sometimes the contact details with a telephone number. Information on parking facilities, road layout or access was usually not provided. Two couriers reported to have a navigation system in their vans, which they found extremely helpful, three other drivers reported that they looked up the delivery points on a map prior to departure and admitted to driving with a map or instructions on their knees to find the location.

### 3.1.2.3 Driver workload and fitness

Three of the courier drivers and the television delivery driver mentioned the pressure to stick to agreed arrival times, and reported lack of rest breaks and traffic jams as the most challenging aspects of their work. One driver remarked that, as the schedules tended to be optimised without any margins, *a delay of 5 minutes at one delivery point could mean a 20 minutes delay at the next point*, without the driver being able to do anything about this. Drivers agreed that too much traffic on the road or increased travelling time as a result of unnecessary traffic such as school runs were particularly frustrating. One participant explained that it was impossible for a multi-drop delivery driver to plan deliveries in such a way as to avoid rush hours or traffic jams. Most drivers could as a result of the tight working schedules not take lunch breaks but frequently ate and drank whilst driving.

When running late for a delivery, courier drivers reported to inform the managers, whereas the television delivery driver was also required to inform the customer. In the food delivery company and the document storage company, drivers reported that the delivery was not tied to a specific time window during the day and thus no notification of customers was usually necessary. Some of the drivers owned up to driving faster to make up for lost time when late for an appointment and one

courier driver generally thought that the speed limit in the UK was too low. Another courier reported to have speeded in a previous job when the manager would ask him to go *as fast as he liked as there was a customer waiting*.

The experience of fatigue whilst driving a work-van was widespread between the drivers, even though only one courier driver reported to drive very early or very late at night. One courier reported, to have closed his eyes on two occasions and to have fallen asleep at the wheel. He found that he was most prone to fatigue between 10 and 12 am. A delivery driver with very similar experience reported that endeavours to keep him awake with music or fresh air were futile. Eating fruit and drinking a lot of water was the recommendation of a courier driver, who reported to feel tired by the end of his workdays. The high cost of fuel and food at service stations of motorways and the absence of cheaper alternatives nearby were quoted as reasons for why some drivers would carry on despite feeling tired.

Even though none of the drivers had ever been in the circumstances where an overnight stay at a hotel would have been required, all of them thought their company would make this provision if necessary. In contrast to this, some drivers believed that their managers would be annoyed or feel ridiculed if they cancelled an appointment because of fatigue. Only the document storage drivers and food delivery service drivers expressed the opinion that their managers would take this seriously and would find somebody else to take the delivery over. One of the couriers pointed out that it was the driver's responsibility to ensure that he was fit for the job and that he would say no if he was asked to do a delivery he didn't feel fit for. However, he admitted that to decline work had financial implications and concluded that if *the driver wanted the money he had to do the job*.

Driving despite feeling ill was reported by three of the six drivers. The television delivery driver felt that as the only driver in the company, he could not let his manager down; he also felt that too much work would accrue over time if he stayed at home. Another courier said he *would get bored at home and so he would come in and get on with it*.

None of the drivers' companies had any health checks, including eye-sight tests in place.

#### 3.1.2.4 Driver competence and training

The four couriers and the television delivery driver underwent driving licence checks, handed in a CV on previous work experience and went through a short interview as part of the selection process. The licences were checked for endorsements and one courier driver reported that a driver in his company was not employed if he had three or more penalty points on his licence.

The food delivery driver reported a minimum driver age of 25 years for employment. The company preferred retired people as drivers and asked job candidates to spend half a day with the company to see if the work interested them and to provide the opportunity for an informal chat. Driving licences were checked for insurance purposes.

Regular checks of driving licences after employment were mandatory in all companies apart from the television delivery company, who only took a copy of the licence at employment stage. Checking intervals were reported to be either annually, half yearly or quarterly.

The induction procedures differed considerably between the participants' companies. Where the television delivery driver had not received any induction, two courier drivers reported that the completion of a Health and Safety video on manual handling was required before the drivers started working. The other three companies had systems in place where the inexperienced driver would go out with an experienced driver (buddy system) and would learn the routes and work procedures over the course of two to three weeks. New drivers would also undergo a health and safety induction. One driver remarked that he would have liked to receive an additional induction on loading the van. The food delivery company driver reported that new employees received a training session on the company vans if they wished. They were also shown where the lights, wipers and emergency lights were.

None of the interviewed drivers underwent a further driver training programme as part of his employment; however the document storage company had regular driving assessments of their drivers

by a qualified assessor in place. Whereas some drivers expressed a keen interest in driver training, others found driving to be a matter of common sense and did not see the need for training. The food delivery driver remarked that driver training and driving assessments had to be carried out in a non-patronising way, to provide support and advice without questioning the driver's skills. He found it particularly important to address risk factors in a training course; securing the load, hazard awareness and understanding of other road users. None of the drivers received refresher courses.

Most of the drivers claimed that adjusting to driving a van was easy and that their van was not that different from a car. One courier driver reported to have taken 20 minutes to familiarise himself with the vehicle and then felt very confident driving it, the television delivery driver felt that van driving *was like riding a bike and that one only had to be cautious with the height and width of a new van.*

#### 3.1.2.5 Safety culture

Participants explained non-compliance with safe driving rules, e.g. speeding, to frequently be a function of job pressures and the wish to get the job done or to get home. One courier driver reported not to wear his seatbelt, even after he had been fined by the police as he thought *it was his choice to wear it or not.* He felt it was *a nuisance to put the seatbelt on and off 80 times a day,* but also claimed he would always wear it if he was in the car with his children.

Drivers tended to feel that they were not up to date with regard to rules and guidance that affected driving at work. The television delivery driver felt that the responsibility for the driving aspect of his job was very much left to him. Most drivers reported to only learn about changes in driving related legislation through the news and the radio; one courier received them as notice on his wage package and the food delivery driver regularly read motoring magazines.

Despite this, most drivers thought that their managers took an active interest in their safety and could not think of any ways to further improve the safety of drivers. A courier driver said that the culture of the job was such that *there were risks and the drivers would know them, but drive anyway as it would be a boring life if one did not take risks.* He thought that courier companies were all the same regarding the safety of their drivers: *rules would be given out and everyone would break them.* Comparing the current company to previous work experiences, another courier said that his current company tended to turn a blind eye to overloading and found that previous companies had been stricter in this respect.

With regard to ensuring the safety of their drivers, the television delivery driver felt that in his company *managers and drivers were all as bad as each other.* In his three years of work as a delivery driver, members of the public had used the contact details on the side of the van to ring up his manager three times to complain about his driving, even though the company did not participate in a 'How's my driving' scheme. Three courier drivers reported to have tracking systems in their vans and one driver thought that driving performance charts were beneficial as they were an objective measure. One courier remarked that the only way managers could ensure that their drivers drove safely would be by driving with them. He however thought that *whereas the supervisors might come for a drive sometimes, the managers would never do this.*

None of the companies had a safe-driving-incentive scheme in place. One of the drivers had participated in a RoSPA awards scheme in a previous job as an agency driver. He thought that giving badges to people for safe driving would be an appreciation of drivers' work and would encourage them to take safety seriously, even if there was no other gain associated with it. None of the companies participated in a 'How's my driving' scheme; one courier even reported that the contact details on his van had been removed by the management to ensure that no-one could call in to complain.

#### 3.1.2.6 Crime and driver safety

Two drivers reported incidents of crime whilst driving their van for work. The food delivery driver reported incidents of theft from the van, including boxes with food and a toolkit. A courier driver had

his company mobile phone stolen from the cab after leaving the van not properly locked. The television delivery driver reported that because of the expensive equipment in the back of the van he always took particular care to lock the van when leaving it.

### 3.1.2.7 Comments

Further comments of the drivers revolved around two issues:

- Two drivers uttered their surprise that vans as commercial vehicles would not require specific driving licences and would not -regardless of their gross vehicle weight- be subject to tachograph regulations.
- One courier driver felt that regular rest breaks should be made mandatory; he also remarked that there often was not enough time put aside to allow drivers to complete a weekly vehicle check.

### 3.1.3 Features of work vans

When asked what they would change in their work van if they could, the most frequently sought change would be the addition of air-conditioning. Further nominations included navigation systems, reversing sensors, windscreen wipers that would not splash the water onto the side mirrors, automatic/tinted windows and seatbelts for all van occupants.

Most drivers indicated that they were very happy with the vans they had, even though most of them had not been consulted by their managers prior to purchase of the van. Features drivers reported to be particularly pleased with included airbags, power-steering, central locking (as it helped to reduce wearing of the lock), electric windows, heated side mirrors and the good acceleration/speed.

With the exception of the two delivery drivers, who drove a Citroen and a Mercedes van, all courier drivers had been allocated a Ford Transit. One driver said that *Transits were the best vans you could drive*, though he thought that Mercedes vans would probably be safer as the driver's seat was higher up.

The most frequently reported active safety feature in the drivers' vans was the anti-lock braking system. Two drivers' vans had traction control, only one had reversing/parking sensors. None of the drivers' vans had the electronic stability program or adaptive cruise control.

Passive safety features included in the majority of the cases were driver and often also passenger airbags and seatbelts for all van occupants. A safety steering column was reported to be present in two of the courier drivers' vans.

Dividing walls and lashing points were regular features in all of the vans, as were central locking and an alarm system.

Attitudes towards the work-vans differed between the interviewees. One courier reported that it was *just a van for work* and that he would treat it much better, if it was his. He did not really care about dents and scratches. Another two courier drivers had very similar attitudes, the only difference being that they had to pay for dents and scratches themselves and thus took great care to avoid them. In contrast to this, two drivers considered their vans to be their work mates, one thought *it was his office on wheels* and called himself *fanatical about keeping it clean and avoiding scratches and dents*.

The majority of drivers favoured vans for everyday motoring purposes. Some drivers claimed they *loved vans* and would prefer driving a van instead of a car as you could sit higher up and would thus be able to see more. One driver had actually sold his car because he used the work van instead. Only one driver claimed that he would not want a van as a private vehicle as it would make parking very difficult.

Participants were asked to choose the three most important features that would influence their purchase decisions out of the following list of seven:

- Fit for purpose
- Price
- Van age
- Brand
- Colour
- Safety
- Ergonomic design/comfort.

'Fit for purpose' and 'ergonomic design/comfort' were very clearly the most popular determinants of the purchase decision, whereas the third criterion varied (nominations included 'brand', 'price' and 'safety'). One driver commented that his buying criteria would differ for a van he intended to use privately, e.g. to transport his children or a van he needed for work. In the first case, his focus would be on safety whereas otherwise the brand (in his case preferably Mercedes or Ford) would determine his purchase decision. Particular features when looking to buy included airbags, anti-lock braking system and visibility in the van. Information sources that drivers reported they would use if they were to buy a van included the internet, public promotions and van dealers where they could test the actual vehicle.

Some drivers felt that as long the van was capable of doing the job properly it would not matter if it was a second hand one. Most drivers however claimed they would always buy a new van on principle as they wanted the warranty and savings on the insurance. If money wasn't an issue, new vans were preferred by all drivers.

#### **3.1.4 Summary**

The majority of employed dedicated drivers worked for courier companies of small or medium size. All drivers reported to drive a Ford Transit for work purposes; in five of the six cases this vehicle had been assigned to them and they carried (financial) responsibility for its condition. Unsurprisingly the employed dedicated drivers did the greatest amount of driving in comparison with the three other groups.

Most of the drivers were uncertain, if their company had a written safety policy covering driving; some remembered to have agreed to safe driving rules in their work contract. If risk assessments, rules for safe driving at work or standard accident procedures were in existence, very little knowledge about them seemed to have filtered down to the drivers. All drivers had to be contactable when driving for work; however, the rules about the use of mobile phones differed between the companies the participants were working for. Whereas some companies did expect drivers only to answer a call when parked, others did not give out explicit rules about the use of mobile phones. Adherence to those rules varied between participants with some participants claiming that they relied on their common sense rather than the law or a company rule. All drivers reported that consumption of alcohol or drugs whilst driving for work was forbidden by their employer. None of the companies had random alcohol or drug testing in place.

Driver selection most frequently included an interview and a driving licence check with no further driving assessment being carried out. Regular checks of driving licences were in place in almost all of the employees' companies; however the checking intervals ranged from three monthly to annually.

Induction procedures differed between the companies: half of them had no driving related induction in place; the other half used a buddy system. Further driver training was not carried out in any of the companies and only one interviewee reported regular driver assessments. Similarly, no company had any driving related health checks in place.

Parking was not regarded as a serious problem by the majority of the employed dedicated van drivers, possibly because the parking durations as a rule were short. With one exception with regard to parking fines, all drivers had to pay for parking or speeding fines themselves.

The workload of the drivers was reported to be very high, with some of the drivers commenting on unrealistic work schedules and a resulting lack of appropriate breaks for rest or lunch. Dangerous behaviours such as eating and drinking or reading maps whilst driving were as a result, frequently prevalent. Rejecting a job was reported to have financial implications for most of the drivers; driving when tired was a frequent experience between the interviewees. When asked for the greatest challenge in van driving, time pressure and lack of rest breaks were consequently named as the biggest stressors. Speeding frequently occurred as a result of job-related time pressure or the wish to get home a bit faster. One driver reported not to comply with the requirement of wearing a seatbelt when driving at work as he regarded this as his personal choice.

None of the drivers felt up to date with driving-related legislation or felt that the management provided this information to its drivers. In spite of this, most interviewees claimed that their management would take the safety of its drivers seriously. There were no incentive systems for safe driving in place in any of the employees' companies, nor did their companies participate in the 'How's my driving' scheme.

Most drivers reported to be very happy with the van that they had and took great care to look after it. This was partly also due to the fact that the drivers had to pay for dents and scratches in their assigned work van themselves. The most sought-after additional features for their work vans included air-conditioning, reversing sensors or satellite navigation systems. This comfort-orientation could be a reflection of the time the drivers spent in their vehicles each day. Together with a predominantly positive attitude towards their work vans, came the preference for vans as everyday motoring vehicles.

The most frequently mentioned factors that would determine their purchase decision when buying a van were 'fit for purpose' and 'ergonomic design/comfort'. The majority of drivers also felt that they would buy a new van on principle if they could.

## **3.2 Employed tradesmen driving a van**

### **3.2.1 Background information**

Details on all companies in this group are summarised in Table 3. The sample of employed tradesmen driving a van for work included a wide range of work activities, company sizes and work schedules. Three small companies (each with fewer than 50 employees) included a cleaning service and a printing company as well as a healthcare charity. The vehicle recovery/repair company operated a UK wide network with thousands of employees, whereas the energy provider was a subsidiary company of a UK wide operating energy provider. 1200 employees worked in the book sale company.

With the exception of the cleaning manager and the event manager, who had allocated vans that they drove every day, all other participants did not have a personally assigned vehicle. Four of the participants used their vans full-time, whereas employees of the energy provider and the printer claimed to use them only occasionally or part-time. The printer reported to make deliveries of print products to customers every three or four days. As a result of repeated business he frequently drove to the same locations. In addition to the van fleet, the energy provider also had a car fleet that engineers or mechanics could use depending on the nature of the job. All interviewees reported to use the van for the transport of work equipment, goods or staff.

With regard to the area that the interviewees operated in, the cleaning manager reported to do the least work-related driving. He was allowed to use the van for private purposes and travelled in it to and from work at a local company, he used it to collect and transport materials required for work. Longer journeys included fortnightly 60 miles drives to the cleaning company's headquarters.

The greatest work radius was reported by the event manager who would drive up to 2 hours (one way) to book fairs and venues. According to him most of the fairs were recurring events, and he was therefore familiar with most routes to the destination.

The mechanic from the healthcare charity drove his van full time to visit customers in a 90 mile radius to maintain or repair their hoists, chairs and bath lifts. Longer journeys were only required if a customer, who had bought a hoist, had moved away from the area, but still had the entitlement to have it serviced by the employee's company. On such rare occasions, he had driven up to 3.5 hours (one way) to a job. Some of the drives to repair jobs had emergency status as the hoist had been in use when it stopped working.

To provide a 24 hour call out service, the HGV technician took his work van home. His work area stretched from Stonehenge to the M25, which meant that he could reach a broken down HGV within an hour's drive.

The printer reported to only deliver locally; for deliveries that were further away the company used the services of a courier company.

Work patterns varied greatly in the group of employed tradesmen using vans as a work tool. 5am was the earliest start of a work shift, reported by the cleaning manager. His work was arranged in a two-shift system; after finishing the morning shift at around ten he would return home and resume the second work shift from 5pm to 8pm in the evening.

The technician's work pattern encompassed a week of 24 hour call out shifts, whereby the actual workload could differ considerably. The engineers and mechanics of the energy provider all worked night shifts.

None of the interviewees' companies employed agency drivers; however, as the jobs of all participants required a skilled worker, who also could drive rather than a driver, this does not come as a surprise.

**Table 3: Background information provided by employed professionals, who use vans as a work tool.**

Role	Industry sector	No. of employees	Van model(s) at work	Private use allowed	Ownership	Working time
Mechanic & driver	Healthcare	11	VW	No	Company-owned	9am-5pm
Printer & delivery driver	Printing	30	Renault Kangoo	Yes	Company-owned	8am-4.30pm
Cleaning manager	Cleaning services	45	Vauxhall Combo	Yes	Company-owned	5am-10am and 5pm-8pm
HGV technician	Commercial vehicle repair	40 locally; thousands UK wide	Renaults	Yes	Leased	7am-7am (24 hour call out)
Engineers/mechanics <sup>3</sup>	Energy provision	200 in subsidiary company; thousands UK wide	Ford Transits, Toyotas & Peugeots	No	Half leased, half company owned	24 hours shift operations
Event organiser	Book sales	1200	Ford Transit	Yes	Company-owned, some leased	8am-4.30pm

<sup>3</sup> 18 engineers and cable fitters of a London based depot individually filled in a questionnaire and participated in a group discussion of issues around driving a van at work. A summary of their views is reported here.

### 3.2.2 *Managing work-related road risk*

#### 3.2.2.1 *Management and systems*

Immediate associations with the term work-related road risk included *a million risks that could happen during work, the first one for a van driver the risk of crashing*. Another driver remarked that he *hadn't thought about work-related road risk yet* and thought that *he was a good driver*. He was *aware of the risk associated with driving, such as fatigue, but did not worry about it*. One driver commented on dangerous driving in elderly road users, who would not know how to negotiate roundabouts. The HGV breakdown technician related occupational road risk to the requirement to *secure the area around the broken down vehicle to create a safe working environment for the repair or recovery as well as the other road users*. This could include the police blocking the motorway off; wearing a high visibility jacket was mandatory in his job. He didn't think that his company had a written safety policy for van driving as such, but that it was touched upon in the general company policy.

The representatives from the two small businesses (printer and healthcare charity) both claimed that there was no written safety policy in their company. One of the two drivers *thought it would be good to have one as not everyone in the company behaved sensibly*. The group of engineers and mechanics was split into those who thought that there was a written safety policy and others who did not. The event manager thought it probable that his company would have a written safety policy and thought of it as *a big book that nobody would read*. With regard to the contents, he was certain that alcohol and drugs were prohibited and that there were no limitations of working time as the *company would encourage its employees to work hard and to earn money*. The cleaning manager believed that the company's safety policy covered alcohol, prescribed and non-prescribed drugs, fatigue and mobile phone use. None of the participants reported the existence of random drug or alcohol testing in their companies.

With the exception of the event manager, participants were required to be contactable whilst driving for work and all companies provided their employees with hands-free mobile phones. Three companies had told their employees not to use their phones whilst driving or to pull over and stop before answering it. One interviewee claimed he would answer incoming calls, but would not make calls himself whilst driving, whereas two drivers stated that they would not answer phone calls whilst driving as a matter of principle. One participant admitted that he would use his mobile whilst driving despite the company policy.

Three drivers and all employees of the energy provider believed that no risk assessments on any aspect of van driving (including the driver, the vehicle, and the journey) were carried out in their companies. The sixth participant was uncertain if risk assessments were carried out, but knew that his van was checked by a specialist who would remedy any arising problem. The HGV technician did not see a need for specific risk assessments; according to him recovery drivers in his company worked in a fairly self-regulated manner and used their common sense. As the company operated an apprenticeship scheme, apprentices would learn from an experienced driver until they would be allowed to drive at the age of 21. The cleaning manager reported regular risk assessments of drivers, journeys and vehicles, but he thought he would only be told about their results if something critical had come up. As a form of driver assessment, his manager would drive with him from time to time.

Asked for the driving-related information the participants were required to document, all participants reported mileage, accidents and incidents to be mandatory for documentation. Information on fuel consumption was partly not required, or was automatically registered through fuel cards. Only the employees of the energy provider were required to document driving time. For the majority of participants, documentation of parking tickets or penalty points was not required; however, fines (speeding or parking) had to be paid by the driver themselves in all companies with exception of the print company who paid for tickets depending on the availability of parking facilities at the delivery address. Only drivers of a city-based energy provider mentioned parking as an important issue. According to this group, parking spaces were rarely available close to the worksite and drivers had to



make a trade-off between parking too far away and thus not to be able to keep an eye on the van they were responsible for and getting a fine. Parking tickets were reported to even be issued at night which was regarded as unfair by the drivers.

The hoist mechanic was certain that there was no standardised accident procedure in his company. He thought himself to be *an excellent driver* with the exception of an accident he had caused whilst driving for work during rush hour traffic. The car in front of him suddenly stopped and he couldn't brake in time. Furthermore he mentioned *frequent near misses with children crossing the roads in an unsafe way*. After the accident, the mechanic had informed his supervisor and the company wrote an accident report on his behalf for the insurance company. Two of the engineers and cable jointers working for the energy provider mentioned accidents when driving for work, which included hitting a wall and parking in front of gates and getting hit buy a car coming through that gate.

Four drivers had no experience of accidents whilst driving at work. Standard accident procedures were reported to be in place in the energy provider, cleaning service and the book sale company. The latter had a driver handbook in each van with a description of what to do in the case of an accident. The HGV technician assumed that in the case of an accident, he would exchange contact details and insurance information with the third party, would organise vehicle recovery if necessary and would notify his insurance company. The same procedure was described by the printer who also pointed out that he always carried his insurance details with him when travelling in the van. In his company, damage to the vehicle would be paid for by the insurance unless it was felt that the accident had been caused by reckless driving. In this case, the employee would be asked to pay for the damage himself.

Only the printer had a camera in his van to take accident pictures. He commented that the introduction of the camera in the van was a recent development. One participant pointed out that he could use his mobile phone to take pictures.

Vehicle maintenance required most of the interviewees to carry out regular checks of tyres, wipers, dents and fluids; however it was only the energy provider, who had pre and post drive vehicle checks in place. The hoist mechanic was supposed to check the fluids and tyres before driving, but reported only doing a daily walk-around. Weekly checks were required form the printer with his company using a vehicle checklist for this purpose. In the vehicle repair and recovery company, the intervals for checks of the fluids and tyres were not specified and the driver *carried them out now and then*. Further maintenance work included weekly or two-weekly safety inspections by transport managers and supervisors, as well as servicing of the vans after a certain mileage in some of the companies. In the case of the energy provider, employees felt that such a general maintenance system additional to the servicing of the vans was missing. *Maintenance would very much mean to deal with problems when they arose*. All drivers reported having taken vehicles with minor defects out for work. One employee remarked that *as a cable jointer you would know a lot about cables, but very little about vehicles*. Employees agreed that the company needed more and more proactive support with the work vehicles.

With the exception of van damage caused through reckless driving or particular stupidity as mentioned by the printer and the HGV technicians, none of the drivers were required by his company to pay for dents and scratches in the work vans.

### 3.2.2.2 *Journey planning and information provision*

The arrangement of work schedules was, in the majority of cases, left to the driver. The HGV technician, the cleaning manager and the event manager were autonomous in setting their work schedules. The latter two reported to plan time reserves for rest breaks or stops for coffee. Neither of their jobs was time critical, nor did it include overly long driving hours: whereas the cleaning manager operated locally and only drove approximately 60 miles to the company's headquarters every fortnight, the event manager served a circumscribed area.

The HGV technician would provide the drivers of the broken down vehicles he came out to repair with an estimated arrival time. According to this interviewee *the knowledge that people were waiting for help gave his job a sense of urgency.*

Supervisors or office staff were responsible for planning the work schedules of the printer and the hoist mechanic. Even though deliveries in his company could be time critical, the printer reported to be encouraged to drive safely. As penalty points for speeding would be registered on his licence, he *preferred to go slowly and not to risk anything.* Depending on the workload, he could not always stop for lunch breaks, but as he delivered only locally, drives were frequently broken up. He thought that *the company was reasonably positive about driver safety and would not want its employees to drive excessive hours.* Furthermore he pointed out that being late did not have any financial implications neither for the driver nor for the company. The hoist mechanic found that his work schedules were often planned without regard for geographic location, but felt he did not have the time to do it himself. On top of approximately eight maintenance appointments per day, he reported to also receive calls from customers whose hoist had just broken down and urgently needed to be fixed. He said that he *thought of these cases as emergencies and felt pressure to get there fast.* With regard to driving speed, *he didn't regard anything as illegal as long as he didn't get caught.*

Contradictory information came from the group of engineers and mechanics. Whereas the engineers tended to be entitled to plan their own work schedules, this was not the case for the mechanics. Similarly, half of the employees thought that working schedules provided enough time to drive to the worksite safely, whereas the other half felt under pressure to get there. The latter group also reported not to have enough time to take rest breaks.

With regard to the information provided prior to departure, the engineers/mechanics and the cleaning managers reported usually receiving the results of a risk assessment on the destination worksite and the details of a contact person. The hoist mechanic and event managers were familiar with most of the locations they drove to through their recurrent nature. For new customers, they both reported looking up the location on a map and checking with the clients prior to departure access conditions and parking facilities. Results of risk assessments on the destination were not available to either of them prior to departure; *this took place on a 'there and then' basis.* Assessment of risks at the point of arrival was also the HGV technician's approach. He reported going out supplied with the contact number for the driver of the broken down vehicle, with the location of the vehicle and knowledge of the cause of the breakdown. At the location, he would make the decision to start the repair or, if he found the situation potentially dangerous, would get the vehicle towed. As he knew his work area very well, he rarely needed to look at a map.

Only one of the participants (the printer) reported having a navigation system in his van, which he regarded as extremely helpful as it saved him the time of looking up the destinations beforehand. All other interviewees reported using a map; a minority of drivers admitted to looking at them whilst driving, whereas others would stop before looking at the map or instructions.

### 3.2.2.3 Driver workload and fitness

Challenging aspects of van driving for work were most urgently expressed by the employees of the city-based energy provider and included the lack of parking spaces and driving despite feeling tired. The latter was attributed to working night shifts as well as the combination of hard physical work and driving. Incidents of feeling fatigued were reported to be more frequent at the end of the work week. The other interviewees mentioned inconsiderate road users. Driving in and around London was regarded as challenging by the events manager; he additionally mentioned congestion as a problem related to driving for work. Two drivers claimed that they quite liked van driving, the printer because he regarded it as a nice break from his usual job and didn't see any particular challenges.

The majority of interviewees did not feel that their job was particularly time critical. The cleaning services manager remarked that running late for an appointment was not really an issue in his job and he could reschedule or cancel if he had an appointment with the headquarters. For the events manager, the loss of commission from the book sales was the worst consequence of being late, but he would

generally *like to stick to agreed arrival times* as he thought this was *part of doing a job well*. Engineers and mechanics characterised their jobs inconsistently again, some stating that time was not an issue, whereas others thought that they were under strict time pressure. Almost all interviewees reported that their driving style would change if running late. As most of the jobs were not time critical, participants had enough time to take lunch breaks. Eating and drinking whilst driving the van were the exception rather than the rule.

Occurrences of tiredness whilst driving had been experienced by half of the participants. When feeling tired, the HGV technician reported he would stop and sleep in road lay-bys. He was able to arrange cover for the next day after particularly busy nights. The printer said he would drink coffee when feeling tired. With the exception of the employees of the energy provider, neither of the participants expected negative reactions from their managers or supervisors if cancelling work because of fatigue. Similarly these participants thought that their companies would encourage them to stay at a hotel overnight to avoid excessive driving hours. However, as most of the participants did operate within a limited geographic radius, most of them found that the scenario was unlikely to occur in their job.

Two participants mentioned that they had driven for work when being ill. In both cases their supervisors had sent them home. None of the companies had any regular health assessments in place.

#### 3.2.2.4 *Driver competence and training*

All employees had a copy of their driving licence taken at recruitment stage and went through a short interview. Two of the drivers were not sure if endorsements on the licence were checked or if there were regular licence checks were in place, whereas others reported that this happened annually. The two employees of small companies reported that no regular checks of licences were carried out. Mixed answers with regard to regular licence checks came from the engineers and mechanics; some thought annual checks of licences were carried out, others were not aware of any licence checks. Two drivers reported that they had undergone a health check at recruitment stage.

Only one of the interviewees had undergone a driving specific induction procedure. Engineers and mechanics felt that inductions should only be carried out by a driving professional as the new driver would otherwise only be taught bad habits. The hoist mechanic reported that he *was given the keys to the van and a list of jobs to do and was left to learn his lesson on the job*. The printer did not see the point of an induction as he thought *that if one could drive, one could drive*. The HGV technician called driving a job task of only minor importance. Driving related information material had been given to the event manager in form of a driver handbook. The cleaning manager was the only one who had received a one hour vehicle induction by his manager. Additionally the company's Health and Safety department had provided him with a booklet on general Health and Safety issues.

Familiarising oneself with and getting used to the work van(s) was not regarded as a difficulty by the participants. One interviewee reported to have driven vans before and found them advantageous to cars with regard to sitting height of the driver, visibility and space. Three interviewees found the vans to be similar to their cars with regard to handling characteristics and thus easily got used to them. Most drivers reported dedicating some time to familiarise themselves with the locations of the controls.

None of the employees' companies undertook any driver training programmes. Only two participants expressed an interest, one in fuel economical driving and one on a general overview on driving related issues.

#### 3.2.2.5 *Safety culture*

The two employees of small companies did not feel they were up to date with legislation and rules relevant to work-related driving. Both felt that their managers assumed that their drivers were aware of relevant legislation. Neither of these drivers knew how their company compared to other companies as they both had worked for them for a long time. Mixed views existed in the energy

provider company whereas all other interviewees thought that they were up to date with regard to the knowledge of relevant legislation. These participants were convinced that their management would inform them of any relevant changes through memos, calls, or leaflets and believed their companies to be very safety minded. Information sources such as the internet or media were also mentioned when participants were asked where they had learned about changes in legislation.

When asked for incidents of non-compliance with safe driving rules, speeding was frequently reported and was regarded to be the consequence of tiredness, being in a rush, a natural tendency for speeding or impatience.

Regarding the encouragement of safe driving practices the cleaning manager reported an informal assessment of driving performance: his supervisor would drive with him in the van from time to time. Three company representatives reported participating in the 'How's my driving' scheme, one employee mentioned that accident-free drivers received a congratulatory email; none of the vans were equipped with tracking systems. Suggestions for improving the safety of employees came from the engineers and mechanics: they suggested the reduction of night time driving.

### 3.2.2.6 *Crime and driver safety*

Only the HGV technician reported incidents of crime in his company. As the beacons of the repair/recovery vans used so much battery power, drivers had to leave the motor running whilst carrying out the repairs. Two vans had been stolen whilst repair works on a broken down vehicle had been carried out. As a result of this, the technicians now carried two sets of van keys to be able to lock the vans whilst leaving their motor running.

### 3.2.2.7 *Comments*

No further comments were made by any of the interviewees.

### 3.2.3 *Features of work vans*

The leader of the list with regard to desired changes in work vans was a more comfortable driver seat. Further mentions were made of air-conditioning, remote locking, a CD player and tape recorder. The driver of the Vauxhall combo expressed a wish for larger mirrors and reversing sensors as the visibility backwards in the van was very poor. A quieter van and more car-like handling qualities were mentioned by the printer.

Interviewees generally seemed to feel rather neutral about their work vans; if complaints were made, these included poor visibility in the panel vans or were aimed at issues associated with multiple drivers using the van, such as the vans being dirty or untidy. The HGV technician, who particularly liked the big fuel tank, the power of the vehicle and the six gears, welcomed his companies' change to Renault vans as he thought *the previous Ford transits had been noisy and not strong enough for the job*. The event manager expressed the opposite opinion, saying *that he would stay with the same model (Ford Transit) if he was to choose*. Other features drivers were pleased with were controls for the radio on the steering wheel. Generally, comfort of the van seemed to be rather important to the interviewees.

With the exception of the printer's van, which didn't have any active safety features, all participants' work vans had ABS. Reversing/parking sensors were only reported by one interviewee. No other active safety systems were reported for the employees' work vans.

Passive safety features in the employees' vans included driver airbags, but no passenger airbags and seatbelts for all van occupants in the majority of cases; a safety steering column was only reported by one interviewee.

The range of additional van features including dividing walls, lashing points, central locking and an alarm system differed between the companies. Only the HGV technician's van had all of these

features, central locking was least frequently built into the vans with only two interviewees mentioning it.

Attitudes towards the vans ranged from

- regarding them as a mere work tool (engineers and cable jointers)
- being pleased with it, keeping it clean, looking after it and avoiding dents
- liking the van, but not caring about scratches or dents
- being attached to it and taking pride in keeping it spotless.

Only two interviewees reported preferring a van to a car for everyday motoring purposes. All other participants preferred cars because of their greater comfort. The reported disadvantages of vans included ‘difficulties with parking’, ‘size’ and ‘back pain and neck problems caused by uncomfortable seats’.

When asked for the most important features that would determine the purchase decision of the interviewees, there was agreement between participants that the following three features were most important:

- Fit for purpose
- Safety
- Ergonomic design/comfort

Further purchase criteria that were mentioned by the interviewees included drivability and features such as cruise control or electric windows.

The majority of employed non-dedicated drivers of vans commented that a second hand van in good condition would be sufficient and that they would not buy new vans on principle. One participant remarked that new vans would lose value very quickly and he would decide on a year old van if he had to choose.

### **3.2.4 Summary**

The group of employed tradesmen using vans as a work tool was very heterogeneous: three interviewees worked for large organisations with more than a thousand employees, whereas three participants were employed by small companies. Their occupations were equally varied, as were their work patterns, which included night-shifts, standard 9 to 5 working times, 12 hour shifts and two-shifts per day work patterns. None of the interviewees worked in a job where excessive driving hours were an issue. The mileage the participants did was furthermore limited through covering a limited geographical area. The majority of employees did not have a particular van allocated to them but drove pool vehicles manufactured by various brands, including Peugeots, Renaults, Fords, Volkswagens and Vauxhalls. None of the participants reported to be financially responsible for the condition of the vehicles. Damage to the vehicle was paid for by the company’s insurance.

Whereas the employees of two of the small companies were certain there was no written safety policy in place, other interviewees were uncertain and only one interviewee reported that his company had a safety policy that covered driving for work. Two interviewees were aware of their companies’ ban of alcohol and drugs; none of the participants reported the existence of random alcohol or drug tests in their company.

All companies had provided their employees with hands-free mobile phones and with one exception, expected their staff to be contactable. Three companies had advised their staff not to make or receive calls whilst driving, but to park the van instead before answering a call.

Systematic risk assessments on driving related issues were reported as an exception rather than a rule. With regard to risk assessments of the driving destinations, some interviewees received the results of

site assessments prior to departures, whilst others reported to carry them out on a ‘then and there’ basis.

Driver selection included a short interview and a copy of the driving licence being taken. Two interviewees also reported to have undergone a health checks. Responses to the question on the frequency of licence checks ranged from ‘no checks after taking the initial copy’, over ‘not sure’, to ‘annually’.

With the exception of one interviewee, no specific driving induction procedures were in place in the employees’ companies. This probably reflects the perception of driving as an ancillary task to the ‘real job’. No further driver training was in place in any of the companies and only one interviewee reported an informal driving assessment on an irregular basis.

Parking was reported as a serious problem for the employees of a city-based energy provider. Participants expressed frustration with the lack of parking in the vicinity of their worksites and the company’s policy that parking tickets had to be paid by the employees themselves. None of the other interviewees reported parking as a problem as appropriate facilities were often in place at the destinations. Speeding tickets were all to be paid by employees.

For the majority of drivers, time pressure was not an issue in their jobs and there were no financial implications of being late or missing an appointment. Furthermore, most of the interviewees had enough autonomy in their job to structure or modify work schedules in such a way as to keep the workload manageable. Probably as a consequence of less time spent in the van, dangerous behaviours such as reading maps or eating and drinking whilst driving were less frequently reported. Despite of the absence of pressure, incidents of speeding were reported by some participants and attributed to impatience, natural tendency for speeding or being tired.

The employees of the energy provider reported fatigue as a result of nightshift and hard physical work as being a serious problem and did not expect their managers to react kindly to the cancellation of work because of fatigue. About half of the other participants also reported incidents of tiredness. However, these employees seemed to be more able to take steps against it and expected their managers to be supportive and understanding.

The employees of smaller companies tended to feel that they were not up to date with driving-related legislation and guidance and that their managers did not really care. The other employees trusted that their company would provide them with information if relevant news came up. Safe driving schemes were in place in four of the six companies with three participating in the ‘How’s my driving’ scheme and one sending congratulatory emails to accident-free drivers.

Interviewees seemed to feel neutral or positive about their work vans. The majority kept their vans in good condition. Only two drivers reported that they would prefer driving a van instead of a car for everyday motoring purposes. When asked what features they would change in their van, most interviewees wanted a more comfortable driving seat or air conditioning. Overall, features interviewees wanted in their work van or features they were particularly satisfied with were comfort related.

When asked what factors (from a list of seven) would influence their buying decision the most, there was a clear preference in this group for ‘fit for purpose’, ‘safety’, and ‘ergonomic design/comfort’. Most of the participants claimed that if they were to buy a work van, it would not have to be new; it could be a second hand van in good condition.

### **3.3 Self-employed dedicated van drivers/agency drivers**

#### **3.3.1 Group characteristics**

Despite considerable investment of time and effort into the recruitment of self-employed dedicated drivers or agency drivers it was not possible to identify a sufficient number of interviewees. The

following reasons are likely to contribute to the difficulties in recruiting this particular group of drivers:

- Self-employed dedicated drivers are a relatively rare phenomenon. As reported in the literature review on van use in the UK, the Spring 2004 Labour Force Survey found that 89% of all dedicated van drivers in the UK work in employment whereas only 11% or a total of 19,000 van drivers are self-employed (Office for National Statistics, 2004). Even if the total number of dedicated van drivers in the UK is likely to be a conservative estimate, the survey findings demonstrate that self-employed dedicated van drivers are comparably few and far between and thus comparably difficult to find.
- Self-employed dedicated drivers have high workloads. All of the dedicated self-employed van drivers who specified their working time in the Spring 2004 Labour Force Survey reported that they work full time. Typically the set-up of a self-employed dedicated driver will be a small or one-man business with the van driver also being responsible for the paperwork and administration. As a result of the high workload, dedicated self-employed drivers are unlikely to engage in activities that will not have a positive bearing on their revenue.
- When contacting driving agencies by phone, contact is made with the manager/supervisors, but not with the drivers themselves. The workload of the agency managers means that identifying and contacting drivers to participate in a survey is not a priority for them.

Only one dedicated self-employed driver agreed to participate in an interview and the information he provided will be presented in the following.

### **3.3.2 Background information**

The interviewee ran a one-man business as a removal or relocation driver, but also offered transport and storage of light goods (industry sector: light road haulage). According to him, the concentration of only working in one area was risky and spreading work activities was the only possibility to ensure a sufficient amount of incoming work. An incoming stream of work was a high priority for the participant who pointed out that *one month that would not bring in enough work could cripple the business*.

The interviewee was the director of his business and thus not only responsible for driving vans, but also for bookkeeping and business correspondence.

As a result of working around his clients and meeting their requirements, his work days did not follow any regular pattern; it could start as early as six o'clock with loading his van if the destination was far away. The interviewee claimed that *distance was not a problem* and that he would not only operate within a particular geographic radius. However, being out at work usually took up eight hours of his day and longer if traffic was bad. Office work took additional time.

He reported employing subcontractors for removals, but claimed that he always did the driving himself and never used agency drivers as he felt this would endanger his business' reputation. With agency drivers, he felt that *chances were that he would get a phone call and something would have been broken; as a small company he would be better off doing things himself*.

The interviewee possessed two vans, a Ford Transit and an LDV Convoy, both privately-owned, but insured for business purposes. Depending on access conditions at the customer's destination he would decide which van to take. In the case of needing a larger vehicle, the participant reported that he hired in the required vehicle.

### 3.3.3 *Managing work-related road risk*

#### 3.3.3.1 *Management and systems*

The term 'work-related road risk' did not evoke any particular association with the participant. He felt that he had systems in place to deal with occupational road risk appropriately and in this context mentioned his breakdown cover. To have two vans available further ensured that he always had a working vehicle at his disposal.

As the only driver in his business he did not have a written safety policy that covered driving. One of the reasons that he did not use anybody else as a driver was that he felt he could not rely on others' reliability to carry out the job in a safe and appropriate way and did not want to carry responsibility for anybody else. Being fit to drive was a major prerequisite for his business and automatically excluded alcohol or drugs when driving. The participant had a hands-free mobile phone in his van and reported never to text on the phone when driving, because *it would not be worth the fine if the police caught him doing it*. With regard to driving time, he claimed to take rest break when he felt he needed one and to use stops for petrol as an opportunity to take a break on long drives or to have something to eat or drink.

The participant did not carry out systematic risk assessments on driving related issues; he would check access and walkway conditions with the client and claimed to be extremely alert to his environment when unloading or loading the van during a removal. The interviewee felt *that it came down to common sense and that one could not pick at everything because with this attitude one would not get anything done*.

Comparing his current job to his experience in a previous job as a data courier in a large organisation, he felt that the safety strategy of his previous employer had had many gaps. Neither the company nor the drivers had cared about the vehicles. In his current position, he took great care to look after his vans and *checked oil and tyre pressure daily to ensure the engine would last as long as possible*. A fire extinguisher in his van ensured that he could quench fires before the engine had been severely damaged. Regular services and correction of mechanical faults were carried out by a local mechanic, who would help at short notice.

As part of his double role as driver and manager, the interviewee reported monitoring all aspects of driving he was asked about. Mileage and fuel consumption fed into quotes and invoices, driving time was taken into account when planning the routes and rest breaks. Parking posed a particular problem in London as there were too few spaces available for commercial use. The interviewee thought that London required a dedicated parking fine budget and that the ticket inspectors there did not follow the rules.

The last accident the driver had experienced was four years ago and took the form of a minor bump. Transporting removal goods required him to drive extremely carefully to avoid the load getting damaged. As the insurance for removal liabilities was extremely high, the participant had a particular interest in driving safely and without an accident.

#### 3.3.3.2 *Journey planning and information provision*

Detailed information from customers on the nature of the work they wanted done, as well as the location, was according to the driver a crucial element for effective planning of how to carry out the work, but also of planning the routes to the destinations. Every day, the interviewee tried to plan a round trip including all locations for the collection of goods or for deliveries. This included trying to find the easiest routes prior to departure and looking on AA or RAC websites to check traffic conditions. In the van, he used a satellite navigation system to guide him, but also held a set of paper maps in the van. Due to this support and preparation prior to departure, reading a map whilst driving was never an issue.



In the interviewee's business, jobs were only time critical if his services were required by a commercial organisation with fixed closing times. In all other cases the driver reported ringing the client to inform him of the delay and the expected new arrival time. Overnight stays at a hotel were, according to the driver, *not really necessary, because you could get anywhere and back in England within the same day.*

#### 3.3.3.3 *Driver workload and fitness*

The participant claimed that he had never cancelled an appointment because of fatigue, and said that *regardless of wind, rain or snow he would be there.* He had however, experienced feeling tired when driving, e.g. when driving on a monotonous motorway and feeling that he was nodding off. He thought that at this point, one should stop *driving as work was work after all and you needed to know where to draw the line.* The participant reported that he did not undergo regular health checks, and that he only took steps when he knew that he had a problem. He had driven when being ill and called this *a result of responsibility as a self-employed driver.*

Challenging aspects of van driving from the interviewee's perspective were mostly aspects of road planning, e.g. traffic lights at particular junctions, which he did not agree with as well as equal rights of all road users and the need to be aware and courteous.

#### 3.3.3.4 *Driver competence and training*

The driver had not participated in any driver training and felt that *after ten years of driving experience he knew how to drive properly. If one followed the rules and remained vigilant, there was not very much that could happen.*

As he changed vehicles frequently, he thought that he could familiarise himself with a new vehicle within the first ten miles of driving it. The interviewee did, however, remark that as a result of the constant change, he sometimes made mistakes with filling the tank with the right fuel.

#### 3.3.3.5 *Safety culture*

The participant did not name any information sources that he used to keep himself up to date with legislation or guidance relevant for driving at work.

He appeared to be highly motivated to drive in an accident-free manner, as accidents always meant damage to the removal goods in the vans. The insurance for removal liabilities was so high that the interviewee was particularly keen not to make any use of it.

When asked for instances of unsafe driving behaviour such as speeding, the driver reported that he had his vans' speed restricted to 70mph and also that he avoided going faster than 60mph because of the very high fuel consumption at this speed (which would be a considerable cost factor). He did not report any other instances of bad driver behaviour.

#### 3.3.3.6 *Crime and driver safety*

The participant reported an incident of having his van broken into; he had left a bag in his van that appeared to be holding a laptop. In the case of an early start he claimed to load the van the evening before, parking it with its back close to the house and immobilising the vehicle so that it could not be driven away.

#### 3.3.3.7 *Comments*

The driver made no further comments.

### 3.3.4 Features of work vans

The driver felt that the more systems one put on the van, the more that could go wrong and that *a van was after all for work*. He was only in favour of power steering and parking sensors. The latter would be according to the driver particularly advantageous as the rear view of Luton vans was extremely limited.

When asked for active safety systems in his two work vans, neither of them was equipped with any. Regarding passive safety systems, one of the vans had a driver airbag and both featured seatbelts. Dividing walls and lashing points were present in both vans and were important for the task of securing the load in removals. One of the vans had central locking facilities, but neither of the vans had an alarm system.

When asked for his attitude towards his work vans, the interviewee said *to love them, as they were his bread and butter*. He felt that cutting corners on the maintenance of the vans would only jeopardise their reliability and would in the long-term damage the business. He felt that in his position as a one-man-business it was *crucial that vans did not break down and that he if they broke down that he had a back up plan to keep the business going*.

When approaching the purchase of a new van, he claimed, foremost to look out for maximum load capacity without overstepping the 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight mark. Further considerations would include the fuel consumption and the stability of the van on the road. Out of the list of seven purchase criteria the driver chose 'Fit for purpose' and 'Price'. As the third most important criterion he suggested 'reliability', which had not been on the list. The interviewee thought that he knew the vehicle market well and would directly go to a dealer to test and decide on a particular vehicle.

As his working in removal and relocations often required the handling of heavy goods and frequently involved little dents and scratches, the participant felt that he would be better off buying a second hand van rather than a new one. Furthermore, he thought that the older van models were more stable than the newer ones, which could easily be affected by side winds.

### 3.3.5 Summary

The researchers had considerable difficulties in recruiting self-employed dedicated drivers for participation in this study. Reasons for this are probably due to the small number of dedicated self-employed van drivers in the UK and the pressures under which they are operating. Despite considerable effort, only one such driver provided information on his business-related driving.

This participant reported that he ran all aspects of his removal business on his own and stressed the importance of spreading one's work portfolio in order to secure a steady influx of work. His work days did not follow a regular pattern, but were flexibly built around his clients' needs. An aspect of major importance of working as a one-man business, was the reputation (and future income) of the company, which the driver did not want to threaten by letting any other person drive his work vans. Reliability of service provision seemed to be equally important, which the interviewee ensured by driving in all weather conditions, despite feeling tired or ill and by abstaining from any substances that might jeopardise his driving performance.

As a one-man business, the interviewee did not have a written safety policy in place, nor did he report carrying out risk assessments. He reported not to drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs as his business would be threatened if he was caught. The same applied for the use of a mobile phone when driving. His work was rarely time critical and, as the manager of the business, he set the work schedules himself. Preparation of the driving routes was carried out in advance and supported by a navigation system. The interviewee claimed never to speed as this would raise fuel consumption and would threaten the safety of his load.

The participant's maintenance schedules included very thorough daily vehicle checks, complemented by regular services.

In summary, the business of the self-employed dedicated driver was very much driven by considerations of profitability. Making his work utensils last, providing a reliable service to customers and keeping overheads down were the driving forces behind the interviewee's actions. This impacted on the way he approached work-related driving.

### **3.4 Self-employed tradesmen driving a van**

#### **3.4.1 *Background information***

Details on all companies in this group are summarised in

Table 4. The group of self-employed tradesmen driving a van for work purposes included four interviewees working in the building or construction business and one retail businessman. All businesses were extremely small with most of the participants working on their own or with one business partner. Two interviewees mentioned the use of subcontractors, e.g. plumbers, carpenters or partitioners when needed for a particular job and only one builder had fulltime employees. Subcontractors were recruited through work of mouth. Neither of the participants used agency drivers in his business, *because there -as one builder said- was fortunately no need*. One interviewee, however, claimed to use couriers sometimes to get work materials delivered to the work site.

All interviewees held multiple roles to cover all aspects of their business: they worked as builders/fitters/retailers, but also managed the incoming projects, managed the business' accounts, created invoices or collected money.

With the exception of the builder with four vans (who did not specify whether he drove a particular van on a regular basis), all self-employed tradesmen were the sole drivers of their vans, which (with one exception) they also privately owned. Only one of the interviewees claimed not to use his van for private purposes, and the same driver reported that he would never use his van for the first meeting with a potential client, but would drive to such a meeting in his private car. He admitted to not having insured this car for business use.

The working times of all interviewees were remarkably similar, roughly following an 8am to 5pm pattern. Two participants claimed to also sometimes work at the weekend. The earliest start of the work day was 6.30am and was reported by the retail trader, who also reported the highest daily maximum mileage with 200 miles. The interviewee working in office refurbishment mentioned 100 miles as the maximum distance he was prepared to drive on a day, but also admitted that this was very much dependent on the incoming stream of work; he was prepared to go further if this was necessary. This attitude was shared by the demolition worker, who felt that the incoming work was very much a result of word of mouth and who drew the line for daily vehicle miles at 120. The two builders reported that they only worked locally within a ten mile radius.

All tradesmen in the sample reported driving the vans full-time and using them for the storage and transport of equipment, for collection of materials or to carry debris to the scrap yard. One builder called his van *a mobile workshop*.

The standard work day for participants working in the construction business encompassed driving to the location of the job, possibly picking up some materials on the way and staying on the job to the end of the work day. The retail trader reported driving to a particular location in the morning, to unload the sales goods from his van, set them up for sale, pack them up afterwards and to drive home.

**Table 4: Background information provided by self-employed professionals, who use vans as a work tool.**

Role	Industry sector	No. of employees	Van model(s) at work	Private use allowed	Ownership	Working time
Director, demolition worker	Ground works/ demolition	-	VW pick-up van	Yes	Privately owned	8am-4.30pm
Director	Retail trade	1 occasional (daughter)	Vauxhall Vivaro	Yes	Privately-owned	6.30am (earliest) – 5pm (early evening)
Director, builder	Construction	1 partner	Transit van	Yes	Privately-owned	8am-5pm
Director, handyman, project manager	Office refurbishment	1 partner & subcontractors	Vauxhall, VW	No	Privately-owned	7.30am - 6pm
Director, builder, project manager	Construction	8 employees; subcontractors when needed	Ford Transits, Ford Connect, Renault	Yes	Business-owned	8am-4pm

### 3.4.2 Managing work-related road risk

#### 3.4.2.1 Management and systems

‘Work-related road risk’ was most frequently associated with *other drivers on the road* and the concern of what *these drivers might be capable of*. The retail trader was concerned that through the greater mileage he did, he was exposed to greater risks than people, who only for example, commuted to work. The demolition worker had heard the term in a previous job working at the roadside and associated it with the requirement to risk assess the working environment. One of the builders mentioned unsecured load in connection with work-related road risk and said he was *very aware of the danger of the kinetic energy of the load when coming to a sudden stop* and felt that he would have *little control on a slippery road surface when driving over 60 mph*. Further mentions were made of the stress of getting to work and emotional issues.

All participants felt they had sufficient systems in place to manage occupational road risk. One interviewee thought that he had a significant insight into the area through his previous job at the roadside, which he found *‘absolutely lethal’ due to the negligence of other road users*. Two participants remarked that they did not perceive the management of work-related road risk as an additional role on top of their other work duties. Where one participant felt that he was *continuously trying to make his work as safe as possible*, the other remarked that he *never thought about it and did not class it as a risk whatsoever*.

None of the self-employed tradesmen had a written safety policy in their businesses and none of them saw a requirement for this. One interviewee said that *because there were only two of them and they used their common sense there was no need for a written policy*. When asked for safe rules they would comply with, the majority of the interviewees reported not drinking at work and not using drugs. Three of the drivers reported drinking and driving after work within the legal limit. One of these participants mentioned that he would always wear a seatbelt and that it was important to form

safe habits. He felt that he had a safe attitude. None of the tradesmen reported setting a maximum driving time limit and felt that within their jobs driving excessive hours did not apply.

The builder with employees reported that the work contract included a ban of drugs and alcohol at the workplace. He also reported having dismissed an employee for drugs use at the workplace. As the builder was self-insured he was concerned about the costs if an employee got injured under the influence of drugs at work. The work contract for his employees did not encompass mobile phone use. All of his vans were fitted with hands-free equipment. All participants reported having hands-free mobile phone equipment in their vans too. One interviewee reported that he did not answer the phone while driving, but returned calls when he had his van safely parked up. The demolition worker claimed to only take simple calls whilst driving, but to arrange a call back if the call required concentrated thinking that he felt would take away his attention for the road. One of the builders experienced frequent problems with his hands-free kit, which effectively resulted in him using a hand-held mobile phone when driving.

None of the five tradesmen had special resources dedicated to the management of occupational road risk. One builder reported to have invested £300 into work-related Health and Safety software that would provide him with regular updates on Health and Safety. This however did not cover work-related driving. The builder found that *keeping up to date with changes and regulations was a nightmare and required a horrendous amount of time*. He regarded it also as *a considerable cost factor and feared this would have to be passed on to the clients in future*. None of the other interviewees had a formalised process in place to ensure they were competent to manage occupational road risk. One interviewee said *that if the new regulations did not appear on the news, he would not know about it*.

With the exception of the demolition worker who reported to risk assess his van before going out on long trips and planned work journeys such that he avoided school runs or builders driving to work, none of the participants carried out risk assessments in association with work-related road risk. Some participants, however, reported to carry out worksite risk assessments. The retail trader remarked that the knowledge that there was no one to replace him made him a very cautious and careful driver, even though he did not carry out risk assessments.

When asked how their business compared to other businesses with regard to the management of occupational road risk, the majority did not have enough exchange with other businesses to give an informed answer. One driver felt that he drove more carefully than other van drivers, who he thought drove their vans aggressively and too fast. A builder who had previously worked in IT felt that work-related road risk had been of very low concern in his previous company.

With regard to monitoring driving-related information, driving time was not monitored by any of the participants. The retail trader monitored every other piece of driving related information, whereas participants in the construction business tended to only monitor fuel consumption as part of the quoting process. Other driving-related information was less frequently documented, partly because there was no one else in the business. The demolition worker reported not to monitor incidents as a van in this business sector would naturally get scratches and dents.

Parking was not regarded as a problem by any participant. The interviewees working in the construction business were mostly parking on private driveways or in open fields. One builder reported to always enquire about access and parking facilities before taking on a new job and claimed that he would refuse to work in London because of the bad parking conditions. None of the drivers reported any penalty points.

The majority of tradesmen had never experienced an accident and expected, when asked for an accident procedure, the same procedure as for private vehicles: exchange of insurance details with the third party, notifying the insurance company and getting a quote for the repairs. None of the drivers had a camera in their vehicles, but two interviewees pointed out that they could use the camera built into their mobile phones.

Both builders reported damage-only accidents to their work vans. Two of the accidents were parking-related, where the driver had miscalculated the space he needed and scraped a vehicle. One accident

had occurred when a car had been driving too closely to the back of the van on a country road to stop in time when the van suddenly stopped.

Maintenance schedules for the work vans varied between the participants. One builder reported that he put his van through MOT and service annually and walked around the van and checked the fluids once a month. Two interviewees remarked that *vans nowadays had warning lights for oil and water problems that one could rely on*. The retail trader reported weekly oil and tyre checks on top of the vehicle servicing. The demolition worker carried out most of the repair and maintenance work of the vehicle himself, this included weekly oil and brake fluid checks, putting it through an annual MOT and said that he *did not want to drive a vehicle that was not safe, especially not when driving it the way he did*.

#### 3.4.2.2 Journey planning and information provision

All of the participants filled multiple roles within their businesses and as project managers, they set their own work schedules. With the exception of initial client meetings, none interviewees' jobs were time-critical and all tradesmen claimed to allow sufficient time for drives. Only one driver admitted to not planning enough time for the loading of his van and thought he should allow more time for that. The retail trader who drove the highest number of business miles, reported to plan in rest breaks on longer drives or to book a hotel for an overnight stay if the driving distance would exceed the limit of 200 miles per day. Two other participants reported to have taken on jobs that required overnight stays in the past in order to avoid long drives. The demolition worker reported long work days and tiredness during the summer months through working on more than on job at a time. However, as all the jobs were local, driving was broken up into small distances.

Most drivers reported that they looked up new work locations on an online route planner or on maps prior to departure. Some of them knew the area they worked in so well that they could use short cuts to avoid heavy traffic on the main roads. Driving with a map on one's knee did not seem to be particularly prevalent in the group, possibly because there was very little need for finding one's way when working locally most of the time, but also, as the comments of three interviewees showed, because it was thought to be dangerous. None of the participants had satellite navigation in their vans. Contact details of the client were always available and one builder mentioned to enquire about access and parking facilities prior to departure. None of the participants carried out risk assessments of the work destination.

#### 3.4.2.3 Driver workload and fitness

Challenging aspects of van driving were mostly expressed in connection with the road environment and other road users, such as children on the road or traffic congestion and waiting times caused by school runs. One interviewee thought that there were too few regulations for van drivers considering the greater weight and lower stability of vans compared to cars. Many inexperienced drivers would *expect their van to perform like a car*.

With the exception of particular occasions such as client meetings or arranged meetings with other workers at the worksite, none of the interviewees found their job to be time-critical. There was, however, a strong sense of responsibility to keep to agreed arrival times in most of the participants as this was associated with good performance and making a good impression. Two interviewees thought that *one should not make an appointment if one could not be there on time as it would create inconvenience*. All participants reported to ring clients or colleagues when running late and thought that *communication was crucial*. With the exception of the retail trader, who, if running late, would not have sufficient time to set up his stock and would lose out on sales, none of the participants envisaged any financial implications of being late for an appointment. Two interviewees admitted to speeding or to driving more aggressively when running late for an appointment, whereas a third commented that the traffic on the roads did not allow him to speed, even though he wanted to.

The fact that most of the drivers were not under time pressure when driving for work corresponded to the finding that only one driver reported to eat or drink in his van whilst driving on a regular basis; most participants took time for lunch or coffee breaks.

Only one participant had ever cancelled an appointment because of fatigue, despite the fact that all interviewees had experienced situations where they had felt tired whilst driving. Even though all participants had reported regular work hours, when asked about their companies' backgrounds, questions on fatigue-related driving brought up incidents of working occasional night shifts or very early in the morning, which were perceived as making the participants particularly prone to feeling tired. The ways participants dealt with incidents of tiredness at the wheel ranged from carrying on regardless and whistling to keep awake to pulling over at the roadside to rest for 10 minutes. The builder who had cancelled the appointment reported to have stopped at a service station for a nap after having started work at 5 am and feeling very tired at 2 pm. One participant provided very inconsistent information: He claimed never to have felt too tired to drive or to cancel an appointment because of fatigue. He then however reported a fatigue-related near miss, where he had fallen asleep at the wheel of his van at dawn. This same driver reported to be prepared to cancel an appointment when feeling ill, *because he did not trust his ability to perform tasks when being ill*. Similar statements were made by all other interviewees, and none of them had driven when ill.

Three of the self-employed tradesmen did not undergo any medical assessment in relation to driving at work. Two interviewees reported to have their eyesight tested regularly (even though this was not necessarily in relation to driving) and one of them remarked that *eyesight was too important to skimp on*.

#### 3.4.2.4 Driver competence and training

As only one of the self-employed tradesmen had employees, questions on driver selection did not apply in most cases. The builder with eight employees reported to take copies of his workers' driving licences at employment stage, but not to repeat checks or not check for endorsements. As an induction, the builder reported to take new employees out in the van, to informally assess their driving and to go through a familiarisation with the vehicle.

With regard to vehicle familiarisation, some interviewees reported to having taken half an hour to familiarise themselves with the location of the controls or with the driver's manual, some reported to familiarise themselves whilst they went along. However, one interviewee also thought that modern vans were so similar to cars that adjustment was not really needed.

None of the drivers underwent any driver assessment or further training and the majority of interviewees made it clear that they did not think they would benefit from any additional training measures. One participant thought that *driver training would not be effective in eliminating bad driving habits and would only lead to an overestimation of one's driving skills*. One driver spoke favourably of driver training and thought it would be useful to be trained on the characteristics of vans that differed from those of the car, e.g. the effect of side winds on the van, but also correct loading or driving in different weather conditions.

#### 3.4.2.5 Safety culture

None of the participants had a formalised process in place to ensure they were competent to manage occupational road risk in their business. One builder reported to use software to update him on Health and Safety requirements of the worksite, however this did not include work-related driving and he did not provide any driving-related guidance to his employees. One interviewee reported to use the web as an information resource for updates on legislation or rules relevant to work-related road risk. He felt that having a small business was advantageous as it would not need systems that a larger company would need. He also thought that in his business, he would ensure to take the time needed for the effective management of occupational road risk. When asked if and how he communicated any safety requirements or standards to subcontractors he used, the requirements communicated to



subcontractors included that *their vehicles looked roadworthy and that they reliably showed up for work*. All other participants did not actively search for driving-related information and thought they would only receive information that was covered by the media, namely the radio.

Non-compliance with safe driving rules was reported by the majority of interviewees and in most occasions comprised speeding. Along with reasons for speeding such as arriving at a meeting in time or disagreeing with a particular speed limit often came belittlements such as *'it is not a serious offence'*, *'everybody does it'* or *'as long as you are sensible, why worry about it?'*.

As a result of mostly being the only driver in the business, none of the participants reported participation in any safe-driving encouragement schemes.

#### 3.4.2.6 *Crime and driver safety*

None of the interviewees had been involved in any crime whilst driving his van for work.

#### 3.4.2.7 *Comments*

One interviewee expressed concern about the lack of training for van drivers and the inappropriateness of asking people to drive vans who had little understanding of their handling and driving characteristics. He found that the introduction of compulsory training was extremely important even though he did not envisage this to be a popular development. The tradesman was concerned *that it would be the death of the one-man bands if managing occupational road risk became a legal requirement, even though he felt one could not argue with the necessity for safer working practices including work-related transport*.

### 3.4.3 *Features of work vans*

When asked for features the interviewees would like to have to improve their current van, two of them stressed the importance of good all-round visibility and said they would find reversing/parking sensors extremely helpful. Two different drivers would introduce comfort features such as air-conditioning or electric windows. Only one driver expressed the wish for a navigation system. Two interviewees indicated that they were extremely satisfied with their vans as they were.

Interviewees' attitudes towards their work vans ranged from very positive to neutral, from strong affection for the van (*I love her to bits*) to regarding it as a mere tool of the trade (*it's a workhorse*). Participants were, however, united in their endeavours to look after the vans and ensure that they were in good condition. With the exception of the demolition worker, who regarded dents and scratches to the van as inevitable in his profession, all interviewees reported to avoid damage to the van. Drivers strongly felt that they would not be able to fulfil the requirements of their jobs without the use of their van and also regarded their vans as a representation of their companies.

The most frequent active safety system work vans were equipped with was the Anti-lock Braking System, which was present in three of the vans. One driver also reported to have Traction Control in his van. The three vans with ABS were also the best equipped vans with regard to passive safety features, including driver and passenger airbag, seatbelts for all occupants and a safety steering column. The remaining two vehicles only featured seatbelts for all van occupants. With one exception, all work vans had dividing walls and the majority also featured alarm systems and central locking. Only one van was equipped with lashing points.

The majority of drivers did not want to use a van for everyday motoring purposes. The main argument against the private use of vans was their size and lack of comfort. One driver remarked that he would like to have the option of using both a car and a van.

Information sources mentioned to inform the purchase process included searching the internet and test driving the vans. One tradesman felt that the franchise dealer was of major importance, regardless of his geographic location, because of the warranty for the van. Another interviewee felt it was

convenient to have the dealer locally, who would service and repair the van. A third participant stressed, that the dealer or the garage was not important as the warranty ran out after only two years. This driver expressed a preference for Ford vans and felt that he did not gather extensive information on other brands because of this. The demolition worker reasoned his preference for VW vans with the interchangeability of parts such as clutches or gearboxes. He however felt that the *newer van models, e.g. the VW Caddy, lacked true definition and a connection between the steering wheel and the road.*

The three most frequently mentioned features in the purchase process were

- Fit for purpose
- Safety
- Price

Brand and ergonomic design were named by two drivers and one interviewee suggested that the list should also include reliability and durability as these attributes were of core importance for a business.

Opinions on the purchase of old versus new vans varied considerably. Two drivers categorically excluded the purchase of a new van and reported to always buy older vans at a considerably lower price with reasonably low mileage. One of these interviewees felt that he could *eliminate almost every technical problem with a van himself*, whereas the other interviewee thought that *a second hand van had had its teething problems sorted out*. A third driver tended to purchase former demonstration models and only one driver reported to buy new vans as he felt the depreciation in vans was low.

#### **3.4.4 Summary**

The group of self-employed tradesmen was the most homogenous of all groups interviewed; four of the five participants worked in the construction and building trade and most participants worked on their own or with a business partner. Only one builder reported to have employees. Reported work patterns were alike, with most of the interviewees starting work around 8 am and finishing work around 5 pm. None of the interviewees reported nightshifts or driving in the early hours of the morning when asked about their business background; later in the interview, however, reports of both emerged. Excessive working or driving hours were not reported by any participant. Instead, most interviewees were keen to keep driving distances to a minimum or reported to book overnight stays when working on a job further away. All interviewees reported using their van for work most of the time and handled damage to their vehicles through their insurance.

None of the participants had a written safety policy in their business or felt that this was necessary considering the small size of their businesses. Common sense was frequently mentioned to be sufficient to manage occupational road risk and most participants felt that they were safe drivers. Three interviewees admitted to speeding in circumstances where they felt it was safe or where they disagreed with the set speed limit. No risk assessments on driving-related aspects were carried out by any of the participants. Knowledge of guidance and legislation with regard to work-related road risk were not proactively sought after in most cases, and had little chance to become known to the interviewees if not covered by mainstream media. All interviewees reported to have hands-free mobile phone facilities in their vans and the majority used them when driving.

The only interviewee with employees reported initial checks of his employees' driving licences with no additional checks. As an induction to van driving, he reported to take out new employees for a test drive and to go through the vehicle functions with them. The other interviewees reported to take approximately half an hour to familiarise themselves with the vehicle/vehicle manual when driving a new van. Most of the drivers did not regard van driving as a difficult task, as they found vans very similar to cars. Driver training was regarded as unnecessary and no interviewee reported to have participated in any training.

As the interviewees in the building and construction trade reported to park at the worksites or on private driveways and the retail trader on company premises, parking was not reported to be a problem for any of the participants.

Time pressure at work was the exception rather than the rule and did not tend have a financial impact for the tradesmen with the exception of the retail trader. Despite this, most participants felt a very strong sense of responsibility of keeping to agreed times as they associated punctuality with being professional. Behaviours such as eating and drinking or reading a map whilst driving were the exception rather than the rule, which might be attributed to the lack of time pressure, but is certainly also a result of a lower exposure to driving. Incidents of tiredness when driving were frequently reported; however, participants seemed less inclined to cancel an appointment because of tiredness than because of feeling ill.

Attitudes towards their work vans ranged from neutral to extremely positive. Interviewees consistently regarded their vans as the means of enabling them to work and thus reported to look after them very well. In contrast to this statement, the maintenance of the vans in some cases relied on warning lights for fluids in addition to regular servicing.

The majority of drivers felt that they did not want to use a van for everyday motoring purposes, mainly because of its size and lack of comfort. When asked what additional features participants would like in their vans, all round visibility and reversing/parking sensors were more frequently mentioned. The three most important factors when considering the purchase of a new van were 'fit for purpose', 'safety' and 'price'. Opinions were split between those who favoured a new van and those who favoured a second hand van.

### **3.5 Managers of van driving employees**

#### ***3.5.1 Background information***

Details on all companies in this group are summarised in

Table 5. Four interviews were carried out with managers of employees who worked as a dedicated van driver or used vans as part of their actual job. The supermarket manager could not be linked with a driver interview as the company did not provide a driver for the interview.

The managers' companies differed considerably with regard to size; whilst the three managers reported that they had one dedicated role in their company, the manager of the smallest company filled several roles at the same time, including managing accounts, planning operations and, if necessary, filling in as a relief driver.

None of the participants' companies made use of agency drivers. The two small companies did not use them as a matter of principle. Both managers felt it was important to provide a particular standard of service. Customers' trust and the company reputation were regarded as extremely important. Three managers reported negative experiences when they had previously employed agency staff and explained that they had access to backup staff. The manager of the food delivery company thought of his service not only as a multi-drop delivery service, but as multi-drop with customer care and drivers who had knowledge of the product they delivered.

**Table 5: Background information provided by managers of van driving employees.**

Role (s)	Industry sector	No. of employees	Van model(s) at work	Private use allowed	Ownership
Sole trader, financial director, relief driver, logistics manager	Home-delivery of food	8 part-time drivers	Mercedes, Ford Transit	Yes	Company-owned
Logistics Manager	Document storage/ warehousing	35	Ford Transits	Yes	Partly company-owned, partly leased
Health and environment engineer	Energy provision	250 at subsidiary; 17,000 UK wide	Ford Transits, Toyotas & Peugeots	No	Company owned
Fleet Manager	Online retail (supermarket)	800 full-time and backup drivers, thousands UK wide	Mercedes Sprinters, dual fuel VW LTs	No	Leased

### 3.5.2 *Managing work-related road risk*

#### 3.5.2.1 *Management and systems*

For three of the four managers the first association with the term work-related road risk was ‘accidents’. The manager of the document storage service thought that his company had sufficient systems in place to cover the safety of their drivers and that despite high traffic exposure the actual incident rate of his van drivers was low. He did not regard managing work-related road risk as a current priority as he reported to have implemented the required system and changes in the past and would now only have to supervise.

For the health and environment engineer, the main consideration in connection with accidents was the welfare of his employees and the impact that an accident at work might have on their lives. The participant was also aware of the financial implications of accidents such as loss of production, but felt that focussing on the financial implications would undermine the priorities that he wanted to communicate to his drivers. Furthermore, he explained that the staff’s perception of driving a vehicle at work was one of a secondary task and that the stressing of employees’ welfare in relation with occupational road risk was more plausible to staff than pointing out the business case. The interviewee thought that more needed to be done to manage work-related road risk effectively and remarked that it was not enough to have documents in place, but that the communication of safety messages and the change of attitudes in employees driving for work was crucial.

To the manager of the food delivery service, accidents meant a threat to his livelihood as they could result in the (temporary) loss of a driver or/and delivery van and thus delivery losses. The interviewee reported that he talked to drivers to explain to them their role as company representatives and asked them to drive carefully avoiding any confrontations with others road users and consequent complaints over the phone. Despite his concern about the potential accident-related loss of deliveries, the manager did not feel that he did enough to manage work-related road risk sufficiently. He also felt however, that with no major accidents and only occasional bumps the systematic management of

work-related road risk would be an additional workload; to make it a legal requirement would strangle small businesses in particular.

The fleet manager of the supermarket associated work-related road risk with the basic induction his company put its drivers through. This foremost included effectively communicating the expected standard of driving to new employees. Even though his company had taken measures to cover the safety of its drivers such as the publication of a road policy statement or the development of induction videos, he felt that improvements had yet to be made to the documentation of accidents, their analysis and the development of actions to reduce their occurrence in future.

Both managers of the large companies reported to have written safety policies that covered work-related road risk as well as drivers' and managers' responsibilities in their company. The policy of the supermarket covered mobile phone use (strictly prohibited even if hands-free), use of seatbelts, speeding, alcohol and drug, defensive driving, training and reviews; this was given out to drivers at employment stage. The document storage company did not have a written safety policy, but included rules and regulations in the employment contracts of their drivers. The manager of the food delivery service did not have a written safety policy in place. He thought that additional company rules on mobile phone use or alcohol and drugs were not urgently required as these topics were already covered by legislation and all his drivers were familiar with these requirements as private car users and people with common sense. He found his perception of his employees as non-typical (and better) van drivers verified since he had not received speeding tickets or complaint phone calls. At the same time, the manager felt he should reiterate safe driving rules with the drivers.

Formal risk assessments on driver, journeys or vans were not carried out in the food delivery service. Risk assessments of delivery locations were unnecessary according to the manager who thought that *if the customers could fit their cars into the drive, the van drivers could normally fit the van, too*. The interviewee had considered the introduction of regular driver assessments but had decided against it because *driving was an emotive issue and all of his drivers had a) driven for a long time and b) were his friends*. The manager questioned if any driver who had obtained his driving license would take the result of an assessment seriously and furthermore expressed concern about the cost of an approved driving assessor especially to small businesses. The manager however also reported to try to minimise risk in the driver selection and journey planning.

A similar concern was expressed by the Health and Environment engineer of the energy providing company. He pointed out that driving in his company was a secondary and voluntary aspect of the employees' jobs and thus he was very concerned that employees could feel victimised if driving assessments were introduced. His second concern in relation to driving assessments was aimed at the senior management's approval and support for the introduction of this measure as well as the arising costs from employing a dedicated driving assessor. Despite these barriers, he worked on the introduction of driving assessments for 2006. Results of the risk assessments of the company's new van fleet had been carried out and forwarded to the drivers. There were no risk assessments for journeys, including driving into a depot or reversing into subway stations, but the interviewee reported to sometimes forward memos to drivers to remind them of particular site hazards, e.g. barrier at particular locations and to advise contractors on site hazards if required.

The document storage company had a system of annual driver risk assessments carried out by an accredited driving assessor and had risk assessed their van fleet. Results from risk assessments fed into the improvement of the site, driver induction and equipment. There were not risk assessments for journeys.

The most sophisticated risk assessment system was reported by the fleet manager of the supermarket. Risk assessments of the driver were reported to be carried out annually by the line manager of each store, resulting in a high, medium and low risk classification and specific training recommendations. All vans and van tasks were risk assessed. As the risk assessment of every delivery location prior to delivery was regarded as unrealistic, drivers were trained in the basic principles of risk assessment and asked to assess delivery points on a *then and there basis*. Results from the van risk assessments were made available to all employees through the company's intranet.

Monitoring of driving related information included the documentation of driving time, fuel consumption, vehicle kilometres, parking tickets and accidents on a regular basis in the supermarket. Incidents and penalty points were not monitored. However, speeding fines were not regarded as a problem in the company, since speed limiters had been installed in the company's vans. The document storage company's logistics manager reported to monitor all of the above with the exception of driving time. As the routes were more or less fixed, excessive driving time was, according to him, not an issue in the company. In the food delivery service, vehicle miles and fuel consumption were monitored on a regular basis. Accidents were only documented in writing if a third party had been involved or if the case was forwarded to the insurance company. The manager claimed that even though he did not carry out regular driving licence checks, he would learn about penalty points through word of mouth and could, as he kept records of the driving rota, identify the driver of a van if a speeding ticket came through. The health and environment officer of the energy provider reported the monitoring of vehicle kilometres, fuel consumption, parking fines, penalty points, accidents and incidents, but pointed out that there was a severe under-reporting for incidents as drivers did not understand the use of near miss reporting and regarded it as additional (and avoidable) paperwork.

Accident investigation was carried out in the supermarket and had resulted in the identification of slow manoeuvring and parking as major accident causes, accounting for 74% of all company accidents. For the energy provider, collision of vans with stationary objects and shunts, both frequently resulting in damage to the van body were most frequent. The health and environment engineer attributed the collisions to a poor attitude of the drivers towards the vans, but also to a lack of familiarisation with the van, particularly its size and turning characteristics. Driver accidents were not investigated in the food delivery company as the manager thought that there were not enough of them to identify trends. Where damage to the vans was relatively small, the interviewee preferred to pay for them privately so as to avoid an increase in the insurance premiums. Drivers were not asked to pay for the damage they had caused. The logistics manager of the document storage company reported that per 350,000 miles annually driven in his company, only three accidents happened. To avoid injury through non-secured items in the vans, all vehicles had been fitted with partitions that separated the collected boxes from the ones to be delivered.

Parking was reported to be a major problem for all participants with the exception of the food delivery service. To deal with unjustified parking fines, the supermarket employed a dedicated officer. The meticulous journey planning and vehicle tracking meant that every unjustified fine could be queried and fines were paid by the company. In the document storage company parking tickets were, in contrast to speeding tickets, paid by the company and not the driver. The company also had a tracking system in their vans that would enable it to query parking fines. The energy provider was the only company who required its drivers to pay for parking tickets themselves.

Maintenance of the vans was reported to be very important to the manager of the food delivery service, he pointed out that his business relied on the vehicles. Weekly checks included fluids, tyre pressure, tyre wear and checking for damage. Regular servicing of the vans was carried out by the van dealer. In addition to servicing and van checks through the fleet manager, the supermarket had a system of pre-drive checks in places. The fleet manager reported that the vans tended to be driven by three to four drivers each day and thus needed to be closely monitored. A similar system of pre-journey checklists that drivers had to tick off was in place in the energy providing company. The health and environment officer however pointed out that checks of tyre pressure tended to be neglected, as drivers had to go into garages to carry them out. Furthermore servicing schedules for the vans depended on mileage.

The document storage company was the only company who expected their drivers to be contactable at work. The company provided hands-free mobile phones. In contrast to this the use of mobile phones, (even if hands free) was strictly prohibited because of the higher risk of accidents during mobile phone use. The energy provider had fitted all work vans with hands-free facilities but tried to discourage drivers to use them whilst out on the road and did not require them to be contactable. The food delivery manager did not provide mobile phones to his drivers and felt that the issue was sufficiently covered by legislation.

### 3.5.2.2 *Journey planning and information provision*

Journey planning responsibilities varied between the four businesses as a result of work requirements. In the document storage company, a regular client base resulted in recurrent routes. The logistics manager reported that he reviewed the workload of each driver every afternoon to ensure the workload was evenly split between drivers on the following day and would not exceed 12 drops per driver. The organisation of the deliveries and collections of the document boxes was left to the drivers' discretion but also depended on client requirements and load.

In the supermarket, deliveries took place between 10am and 10pm and had to fit a narrow time window of one hour. The fleet manager stressed how important the planning of journeys was to be able to operate successfully and reported the use of a dynamic routing system that took time of day and road speed limits and the time required for the delivery itself into account. This system, however, could not account for congestion or accidents. All delivery vans were therefore fitted with satellite navigation that was linked to a traffic master system with live information on hold-ups and congestion. Van drivers only received post codes for the delivery locations and were, depending on traffic conditions, piloted along the originally planned route or an alternative route to avoid hold-ups.

In his journey planning the food delivery service manager tried to avoid busy roads: the loading of the vans took place between 8 and 9am and most drivers were back from the deliveries before the rush hour in the afternoon. The manager also avoided schools between 3pm and 3.20pm in his route planning. Due to a regular client base, routes were predominantly fixed.

There was no systematic planning of journeys in the energy providing company. However, as the sites remained the same, most drivers were familiar with the routes. The health and environment officer reported that supervisors or engineers gave staff instructions of where to go, but would leave it to the employee to plan the journey.

Information made available to the driver was in most cases parsimonious as routes tended to be recurrent and drivers had received training on them. The supermarket drivers only received the postcode of their destination. Satellite navigation was available in the supermarket and box storage vans and both managers reported that the system was very popular between the drivers.

### 3.5.2.3 *Driver workload and fitness*

Time pressure only played a role in the supermarket where the daily quota for delivery drivers was 12 drops per 4.5 hour shift. Flexibility in the system for incidents was according to the fleet manager, of great importance to avoid excessive driver stress and increased risk taking resulting from time pressure, if for example, the drivers arrive at their destination later than planned. In contrast to this the manager of the food delivery service stressed that his business did not operate with narrow time windows to satisfy customers, but would plan the routes in the most environmentally friendly way and without putting the drivers under time pressure. 90 drops were the average number of deliveries each driver made in a shift. The interviewee pointed out that there were *unscrupulous operators who would overload their vehicles or expect their driver to work excessive hours*. As he however worked as a relief driver in his own business, he knew how many drops could reasonably be expected from a driver. The small size of the company vans furthermore limited the number of possible drops to 100 and had the benefits of fewer incidents due to better manoeuvrability of the vans.

Fatigue was a particular problem in the energy providing company, which operated a two shift (day and night) system with shift durations of eight or twelve hours. According to the health and environment engineer, reports of fatigue in staff working night shifts were frequent. Even though the interviewee pointed out that any member of staff who felt too tired and unfit to drive had the right to ring in and cancel his shift, he had never heard of anybody doing so. Overnight stays in hotels to avoid excessive driving were encouraged by the company. The manager of the food delivery service reported that a system was operated with part time drivers to allow flexibility and to always have relief drivers who could take over if a regular driver called in sick or because of being too tired. As one of his drivers also worked night shifts in a second job, he had raised the issue of fatigue whilst



driving with her and was confident that his drivers would let him know if they were unfit to drive. The logistics manager of the document storage company remarked that there was a limit to drivers' performance that he paid attention to in the planning of drivers' workload. He felt that you *could not expect a driver to do more drops after having driven eighty miles into London and back*. After a number of fatigue-related accidents in the supermarket, fatigue was taken very seriously at senior management level and supervisors were trained in detecting fatigue in drivers. Drivers who did not sleep enough due to interruption of their family life, e.g. a newborn baby, were encouraged to report this and were for the duration of the interruption employed in a non-safety critical area, e.g. in a depot.

The energy providing company was the only one of all four companies who reported to conduct pre-employment medicals and also had random alcohol and drug testing in place. The reason for this was the safety critical nature of the employees' work. The food delivery service manager thought that *eye-sight tests for drivers were not necessary as the need for glasses was covered in the driving licences*. Any medical checks would come as an additional cost to the company and were thus not carried out.

#### 3.5.2.4 *Driver competence and training*

All managers reported that they carried out driving license checks and on-road driving assessments prior to employment. Whereas in the food delivery service no further checks of licenses were carried out, all other companies had annual license checks in place. The selection of individuals who would make good drivers was regarded as a crucial process by all participants for successful operations and low accident rates. The logistics manager from the document storage company claimed to *keep the interview short and to instead focus on the observation of how the driver got on with the job*. He felt that *driver attitude and customer relations were the most important values for the job and that he had been extremely lucky with his choices*. The fleet manager of the supermarket reported that he preferred to employ older drivers and the existence of a minimum driver's age of 21 years. Similar restrictions were applied by the food delivery service manager, who employed a minimum driving age of 25 and *preferred retired drivers, who he found more methodical and more reliable*. Whereas the supermarket and document storage carried driver assessments out on a (bi) annual basis after employment, no further assessments were in place in the other two companies. In the supermarket the classification of the driver as low, medium or high risk determined further training requirements.

Driver induction procedures included approximately two weeks shadowing time for new drivers in the food delivery business and the documents storage company. In both cases drivers familiarised themselves with the fixed delivery routes and required work activities. Familiarisation with the vans, however, only took place in the food delivery business, where reversing and manoeuvring of the loaded versus unloaded van was practised with the drivers. In the energy providing company, the induction for new employees mostly consisted of general health and safety matters and issues around working with electricians. An induction procedure for work vehicles was only in place for the new vans, not for the older vans. There was no driver handbook; instead drivers were referred to the safety policy. The fleet manager of the supermarket reported that he conducted a very detailed driving specific induction, including on-road exercises in slow manoeuvring and defensive driving, a presentation on accident statistics, drink-driving, the 'morning after effect', prescribed and illegal drugs and their effects on driving and training in manual handling and vehicle loading.

With the exception of the supermarket, which provided further driver training depending on the result of the driver assessment, none of the other three companies made any provisions for driver training.

#### 3.5.2.5 *Safety culture*

Challenges with regard to the management of occupational road risk, mentioned by the participants included:

- Balancing Health and Safety requirements with profit making as reported by the logistics manager of the document storage company

- The difficulty to change the mindset and attitudes of employees driving work vans and to make them understand the potential danger of driving at work as reported by the environment officer of the energy provider, and
- The lack of resources as reported by the food delivery service manager.

Whereas the environment officer characterised his company's attitude as *trying, however with a lot of work remaining*, the two other interviewees felt that their companies were not worse than other companies of comparable size. The food delivery service manager argued that larger companies were more aware of occupational road risk, whereas the smaller companies would *often only trade gory stories on bad drivers and hope for the best whilst continuing as before*. The interviewee named friends and the internet as information sources on work-related road risk but also stated that it would be unlikely for him to proactively search for information, and he would only be interested in learning more about managing work-related road risk if it did not add to his already busy day. The health and environment officer felt he had sufficient resources for the management of occupational road risk, even though the much-needed support by senior management for the issue was lacking. He thought that change in *the senior management's attitude toward work-related road risk would unfortunately only result from a tragic event in the company*. Information sources he utilised included 'Fleet news today' and the internet especially the RoSPA, DfT and Brake websites. The fleet manager of the supermarket felt that because of the absence of regulations for vans compared to the more strictly regulated LGV market his company had not been doing enough to manage occupational road risk effectively and had for example, only recently introduced a comprehensive training package for van drivers.

Incidents of unsafe behaviour in drivers were attributed to dissatisfaction with the company, stress or indifference by the health and environment engineer of the energy provider. The interviewee's company did not have any systems in place to punish or reward employees for good or unsafe driving. The driving performance was also not monitored in any way. Both the food delivery service and the document storage company had their name and telephone numbers on their vans that allowed people to ring in and complain if a driver had not driven satisfactorily. Both managers reported that they would speak to their drivers about the importance of representing the company on the roads, and neither of them had any recent incident of complaints about driver behaviour. The food delivery manager found the idea of a monthly staff bonus for accident-free driving attractive, but also pointed to the danger of accident under-reporting and the need for stricter vehicle checking under such a scheme. The supermarket's fleet manager mentioned that an accident-free driving bonus scheme had been abolished in his company for reasons of accident underreporting. The company was able to monitor driver performance through vehicle tracking at all times.

### 3.5.2.6 *Crime and driver safety*

Incidents of crime reported by three of the four interviewees included theft of a mobile phone from an unlocked van (document storage company), theft, road rage and the violent attack of a van driver (energy provider) and theft, violent attacks of van drivers and taking a van driver hostage (supermarket). In the latter case, particular delivery post codes had subsequently been excluded from delivery to avoid similar incidents.

### 3.5.2.7 *Comments*

The health and environment engineer stressed the importance of keeping work vehicles clean, especially when driven by a variety of drivers during the day. He believed there was an association between the internal state of the vehicle and driver fatigue.

### **3.5.3 Features of work vans**

Managers reported different approaches in their choice of current work vans. The document storage company's logistic manager had carried out a direct comparison between a Mercedes Sprinter, which had been the company's previous fleet vehicle and a Ford Transit and had found the Transit superior with regard to visibility (bigger mirrors and windows), comfort (armrests and drink holders), accessibility for loading and economy. Problems with the Sprinter's sliding doors and locks had further corroborated the decision for the Transit as the new fleet vehicle.

The supermarket's fleet manager had been guided in his choice of van by the reliability and quality as well as the resale value of the vehicle. Employees had influenced the choice of van in the energy provider during toolbox talks. Quality, trustworthiness and proximity had additionally played a role in the vehicle selection process. According to the health and environment engineer, the consideration of driver ergonomics would have been desirable, but could not be realised as the vans were used as pool vehicles with a variety of drivers. In the food delivery company, the running costs and proximity of the dealer for vehicle maintenance had determined the purchase decision. Van age was not regarded as an important factor and one of his vans had been bought as a second hand vehicle. The manager of the document storage company reported to use second hand vehicles as the loss of value was so great in the first few years. Visiting dealers or vehicle suppliers were most frequently mentioned as information sources for the purchase decision.

Regarding safety equipment, reversing sensors or alarms and ABS were the only reported active safety systems fitted to vans in three of the four companies. All companies' vans were reported to feature seatbelts, the availability of airbags varied between different vans within the same company. With the exception of the energy provider, none of the companies equipped their vans with safety steering columns. Airbags, seatbelts and a safety steering column were all present in the energy provider's new van fleet. The supermarket vans were fitted with airbags and seatbelts, but did not feature a safety steering column. Dividing walls and lashing points were present in all companies' vans, whereas alarm systems and central locking varied between vehicles in the same company or did not feature at all.

When asked for the three most important features that would influence the purchase decision, the majority of participants voted for the following three features to be most important:

- Fit for purpose
- Price
- Ergonomic design/comfort.

### **3.5.4 Summary**

Three of the four managers interviewed in this part of the study worked in the industry of goods delivery; two managers worked for small, two for large companies. Only the manager of the smallest company filled more than one role; also managing the accounts and paperwork as well as helping out as a relief driver. This manager was the only one to mention the lack of resources as a challenge in dealing with occupational road risk. All other managers were dedicated fleet, logistics, or health and safety managers and regarded safety-negative driver attitudes, difficulties in getting the safety message across and balancing health and safety requirements with profit making as challenging in managing work-related road risk.

The two bigger companies reported having written safety policies that covered driving for work; the logistics manager of the document storage company asked new employees to agree with company policies such as bans of alcohol and drugs at work in the employment contract. The manager of the food delivery service did not have a written safety policy or contractual safe driving requirements. He reported that he communicated the need to drive courteously and safely verbally to his drivers and felt that too much legislation would be detrimental to small businesses like his.

Only the fleet manager of the supermarket reported a formal risk assessment system covering all aspects of driving including the driver, the vans, van tasks and journeys. Driver assessments and vehicle assessments were mostly in place formally or informally in the other three companies. With regard to journey planning, the food delivery manager reported that he planned the routes in such a way as to avoid particularly busy times or particular hazards on the route such as schools.

The driver selection was regarded as a crucial stage by three of the managers to ensure low incident rates. Minimum ages and preferential employment of older drivers were reported in two cases. Inductions to van driving were extensive in three of the four companies, as an important aspect of the job was the knowledge of fixed delivery routes. Further training was only provided in the supermarket, based on the results of the drivers' regular risk assessments.

Time pressure at work was only present in the supermarket, where narrow delivery windows of an hour required a sophisticated route planning process and online re-routing in the case of hold-ups. In the three other companies, timely arrival was not required. Fatigue was reported to be a major problem in the shift work pattern in the energy providing company. The health and environment engineer did however point out that none of his employees had ever absented themselves from work due to fatigue.

In the supermarket, monitoring of employees' driving performance was possible through the means of vehicle tracking. Two companies had their company details and contact numbers written on their vans and regarded this as an effective way to be informed about instances of bad driving by their staff. None of the companies operated reward schemes for accident-free driving; instead two managers pointed out the danger of under-reporting of accidents under such a scheme.

The selection and decision making process for a particular van models differed between the four interviewees. For the document storage company, it was the result of a direct comparison between the company's previous van and a comparably big different van. Two interviewees named the proximity of the dealer for maintenance as important factors. Only one manager had consulted his staff about van preferences. All interviewees named 'fit for purpose' as a buying criterion. Price and ergonomic design/comfort came second and third. One interviewee suggested extending the list by including 'maintenance' as a factor.

### **3.6 Comparison between drivers and managers interviews**

Comparisons could be made between the managers and drivers from three companies:

1. The city-based energy provider
2. The South-England-based document-storage company and
3. The South-England based food delivery company.

Each example will be treated as a case study and areas of disagreement between managers and drivers or important issues will be highlighted.

#### **The city-based energy provider**

The interview with 18 members of staff, working mainly as engineers and mechanics, was carried out as a group discussion in addition to individual questionnaire completion. Differences between the interview answers of the health and environment engineer and staff revolved around driving related regulation in particular; thus showing a lack of successful communication between management and staff. The majority of staff were unaware of the written safety policy in their company or the results of van risk assessments that the health and environment engineer had mentioned. This emphasised the manager's statement that *it was not enough to have the right documents in place and that management also had to communicate the safety message.*

The manager and staff agreed on the driving related elements of the employment process including driving licence checks, documentation of penalty points and pre-employment medical. Most of the drivers were, however, unaware of the annual driving licence checks mentioned by the manager.

Differences between manager and drivers emerged for the list of variables on driving monitored by the company on a regular basis. The managers claimed to look at vehicle miles, fuel consumption, accidents/incidents, penalty points and parking tickets. Staff were unaware or uncertain about the monitoring of fuel consumption, parking and penalty points and believed that driving time was also monitored in the company. All drivers reported that they were familiar with the company's accident procedure.

Parking was regarded as a serious problem by staff and the manager; furthermore, staff thought it unfair to be asked to pay for parking tickets themselves as there were not enough opportunities for parking close enough at a site to have the necessary work equipment at hand.

The maintenance of the work vans was an area of dissatisfaction for the drivers. They felt that the company's approach to vehicle maintenance was very much a system of fixing problems when they arose instead of having a general scheme in place that worked more proactively towards maintaining the vans. Staff reported that they carried out daily vehicle checks as required, but also reported having to drive vehicles with minor defects they did not know enough about.

The company's guidance on not using the company fitted hands-free mobile phone whilst driving, but to stop somewhere safe and call back had been successfully communicated to the majority of the drivers. Some drivers, however, reported that they used their mobile when driving despite the rule.

The health and environment engineer's statement that time pressures were not imposed onto staff when driving for work, contrasted to the reports from some members of staff, who felt that they operated under time pressure and did not have sufficient time for breaks. Some members of staff reported high pressure to keep to agreed arrival times; changes in their driving style occurred as a result of this along with reactions from managers when running late for an appointment such as *the advice to speed up*.

As the manager had reported, fatigue as a result of shift work and hard physical work was a serious issue in relation to driving at work. The confession of some drivers to have fallen asleep whilst driving, however, came as an unexpected surprise for him and identified the need for future action.

In contrast to the manager's statement that a lot had happened over the last year regarding vehicle inductions and that an induction procedure for the new van fleet was available, the majority of employees were unaware of an induction procedure that covered driving. Those who reported a vehicle induction suggested that it was carried out by a professional driving assessor to avoid the adoption of bad driving habits.

Many of the drivers did not feel up to date with rules and regulations in connection with driving. The majority of the employees did not think that their managers took an active interest in their safety when driving for work. The health and environment engineer agreed with this and felt that only a serious accident would change the attitude towards occupational road risk.

### **The South-England-based document storage company**

The comparison of the interviews with the logistics manager and a driver of the document storage company showed very few differences. This could be a result of better communication between management and employees, but could also be a function of the company size and shorter communication channels compared with the energy provider company.

Instead of a written safety policy, the manager reported including company rules on safe driving in the employment contract. The driver was aware of these requirements such as a ban of alcohol and drugs. The driver thought that risk assessments were carried out by management; however he assumed them to be in relation with the ISO registration and to be limited to the workplace. He had not been involved in the van assessment reported by the logistics manager.

The manager and the driver agreed in their listing of driving related variables that the company monitored and their description of the company's accident reporting procedure.

They also both reported pre-employment and annual driving license checks for insurance purposes. As an induction, the driver reported that he shadowed a colleague for 2 weeks and had to participate

in a manual handling course. Instructions on how to load a van correctly had, to his regret, not been part of the induction.

Work days were reported to regularly last from 8am to 4pm and driving schedules were set by the manager. Even though both manager and driver claimed that the delivery of boxes was not time-critical, the driver reported to have his lunch whilst driving most of the days and only to stop for a thirty minute lunch break if he had time to do so. He furthermore reported instances of speeding if he felt that he was behind schedule; he had received 3 penalty points for this whilst driving at work.

Despite the availability of a satellite navigation system as confirmed by manager and driver, the driver reported that he sometimes drove with a map on his knee when trying to find a new customer.

The driver and the manager agreed that a day of making deliveries would fatigue the driver and the logistics manager kept the workload of drivers at a limit of twelve deliveries per day. The employee furthermore confirmed that drivers with sleep disruptions had been temporarily replaced by management without negative consequences for them.

Both manager and driver agreed that the company's staff turnover was exceptionally low and that employees enjoyed driving for the company. A high standard of driving was ensured by biannual driver assessments.

### **The South-England-based food delivery company**

High agreement was also found between the manager and the driver of the food delivery service as the manager employed friends and family members. The small size of the company furthermore allowed direct communication with the drivers.

The company did not have a formalised approach to managing work-related road risk and did not have a written safety policy or safe driving requirements built into the work contract. The manager thought that the introduction of mechanisms to manage work-related road risk effectively would be an additional burden in terms of cost and time for especially the smaller businesses. Both the manager and the driver agreed that issues such as alcohol/drugs and driving or mobile phone use were already covered sufficiently by existing legislation. Whereas the manager reported to use his hands-free set whilst driving, the driver admitted to using his hand-held mobile if he thought the road environment permitted it.

The manager stressed that he talked to his staff to remind them of the importance of safe driving to represent the company well and to discuss any difficulties resulting from employee's second jobs such as fatigue after night shifts. The driver confirmed this.

Good vehicle maintenance was regarded as particularly important to avoid interruptions in the deliveries. Drivers were advised to report defects and perform regular checks of the vans on the weekends; furthermore, regular servicing was in place.

As the manager also worked as a relief driver in his company when necessary, he felt he had a good understanding of the workload a driver could manage in his shift. Time pressure did not play a role in the delivery process, and both the driver and the manager agreed that the job was as much about customer relations and product knowledge as about the delivery of the boxes. In his route planning, the manager tried to avoid busy times on the roads and hazards such as schools.

Driver selection was seen as crucial by the manager, who preferably invited older or retired job applicants to watch the delivery process for half a day before making up their minds. The induction procedure required several days of shadowing a driver to learn the fixed routes. For new customers, the manager supplied his drivers with map print outs. The driver admitted to driving with the map on his knees when looking for a new customer.

The manager thought that regular driver assessments were a good idea, but he also felt that driving was an emotive topic and there would be similar acceptance for assessments between his staff. This was confirmed by the driver who reported to have been subjected to driver assessments with an incompetent driving assessor in his previous job, whose advice he discarded and ignored.

## 4 Discussion and conclusions

The in-depth interviews with the four groups using vans for work purposes and with the managers of employees driving vans for work produced a wealth of information on how the participants dealt with work-related road risk and what van features were particularly important for them.

### Characteristics of the groups

All four groups had specific characteristics resulting from their particular work tasks and patterns.

Unsurprisingly, the dedicated employed drivers covered the greatest distances and reported driving the longest hours. At the same time they did not have any influence on the journey planning as this was carried out by managers or control staff. All drivers worked in the delivery of goods or courier business, an industry sector characterised by its high time pressure and stress level. As a result of spending the workday in the van and the absence of breaks, potentially activities, such as eating or drinking or reading a map whilst driving, were more frequently reported by employed dedicated drivers than by any other group. The dedicated employed drivers reported driving licence checks more frequently than any other group and were the only group who reported to be made financially responsible for damage to the van.

Most of the employed tradesmen were autonomous in planning their journeys when travelling at work and time pressures did not really exist. Work patterns were, however, very different and encompassed night-shifts as well as 24 hour on-call shifts with particularly frequent reports of fatigue. Compared to the dedicated van driver group with high time pressure, fewer incidents of potentially unsafe behaviour whilst driving were reported and most interviewees claimed to take regular breaks when driving. Travelling distance was limited through covering a specific geographical area. Employed tradesmen tended to expect their managers more than other groups to provide them with relevant driving-related information and to take responsibility for vehicle maintenance as they felt that their expertise laid elsewhere.

The fact that only one self-employed professional driver could be persuaded to participate in the study indicated that this particular group works under high economic pressures and is reluctant to get involved in activities that are not directly profit related. This was confirmed by the interviewee, who approached the issue of driving his van for work from the perspective of profitability, namely through the avoidance of accidents and consequent rises in insurance claims and the avoidance of behaviours he could be prosecuted and fined for by the police, e.g. mobile phone use, speeding or use of drugs and alcohol.

The self-employed tradesmen were a uniform group in the construction business with regular work patterns and the tendency to keep driving to a minimum and working locally. Journey planning was in all cases carried out by the tradesmen themselves and time pressures were not present in their work. As most of them worked alone or with a business partner they were the group that reported the least formalised approach to managing occupational road risk. They frequently did not see the need for systems to manage work-related road risk as they felt that driving safely was common sense. Despite the interviewees' conviction to be safe drivers and to do enough to manage work-related road risk efficiently, many of them admitted to speeding and a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving. Compared to all other groups, the self-employed tradesmen reported the poorest van maintenance regimes with some relying solely on the vehicle warning lights.

Establishing the characteristics of the different groups of van drivers could be helpful in tailoring road safety interventions to the particular needs of the targeted group and thus maximising the likelihood of success. Such characteristics, however, need validation through exploration with representative samples. This will be discussed below under 'future research and outlook'.

### Absence of procedures in all groups

The interviews identified great variability in the current practice of the participants' businesses, but also brought out common themes across the groups in certain areas: Overall, the interviews clearly demonstrated limited awareness of what effective management of work-related road risk entails in

companies and businesses using vans as work vehicles. Three areas were particularly characterised through the absence of action across almost all companies and businesses represented in the interviews:

- Medical driver fitness, including eyesight testing
- Driver training and assessment
- Safety culture and communication.

Monitoring of medical driver fitness, e.g. through regular health checks, was not carried out in any of the companies and there was no awareness of driver fitness as an issue in the management of occupational road risk. Only one company representative reported to carry out medical checks prior to appointment; however, this was in relation to the actual job employees were working on and not in relation to driving. Only a few drivers subjected themselves to regular eyesight checks because they thought vision was crucial for safe traffic participation. One of the small business representatives felt that the introduction of medical fitness assessments would be an additional cost that would make business survival more difficult. Contrasting these findings with the LGV industry, where regular medical assessments are prescribed by law, demonstrates how little is currently done on a voluntary basis to ensure driver fitness in companies using vans.

Provision of training for van drivers differed between the companies. A considerable proportion of employed van drivers reported not to have received any induction or training on the vans they were supposed to drive. Where fixed routes existed, newly employed drivers shadowed experienced drivers to learn the routes over the course of approximately two weeks. None of the self-employed participants had ever participated in driver training and some of them claimed that driving a van was like driving a car and did not require any specific adjustment. Ongoing supervision of the driving performance through formal or informal driving assessments carried out by a line manager or accredited driving assessor were the exception rather than the rule. The common theme between almost all companies was the lack of training on important issues such as how to load a van, the effect of load on the handling characteristics, driving in different weather conditions or on human factor issues such as stress, fatigue or alcohol and (over the counter) drugs. Hesitation to introduce driver training came in many of the cases from the point of view that driving is a private activity a driver qualifies for through obtaining his driving license, even if it takes place in a work context, and thus something the employer should not get involved with.

The majority of interviewees felt that they were not up to date with current guidance and regulations regarding occupational road risk. Many of the employed van drivers expected to be informed by their managers on important issues; the self-employed often thought that the small size of their businesses exempted themselves from any formalised procedures and thus from the need to search for information on work-related driving. The fact that many of the employed interviewees were uncertain, e.g. if their company had a written safety policy, if any risk assessments on driving-related aspects were carried out or if their company had a standard accident procedure in place furthermore demonstrated a lack of drivers' awareness for occupational road safety and thus a failure of successful communication of safety messages by their managers. A lack of knowledge with regard to occupational road risk issues was also found in self-employed interviewees who frequently admitted to not proactively searching for information on this topic. Awareness of one's legal responsibilities and sources for support and information are, however, essential to managing work-related road risk effectively.

### **Problems across the groups**

Further issues that emerged in all groups included mobile phone use, speeding and fatigue. However, there were no noticeable trends in the four groups with regard to the way that these issues were handled by different companies or individuals.

Most of the companies expected their employees to be contactable while driving at work and provided hands-free mobile phones. Some of the companies explicitly advised their drivers not to use them whilst driving and to return call when parked up safely. Others did not give any directions on the use



of mobile phones as they felt that this was sufficiently covered by legislation. A considerable number of participants admitted to using hand held mobile phones when they felt the road environment allowed this. A similar attitude was frequently expressed with regard to speeding, a violation that frequently occurred across all groups and was often belittled by the drivers. Time pressure and little control over journeys did only really affect the employed dedicated driver group. Other participants attributed their speeding to the wish to get home, impatience or a natural tendency to drive faster.

Instances of fatigue occurred across all groups, but were particularly stressed by those interviewees who had to work at night. Whereas some interviewees understood fatigue as a problem that required immediate action and would stop for a nap at the roadside, others did not think that tiredness was a valid reason to stop and continued driving. When asking employed tradesmen or employed dedicated drivers how their managers would react if they refused to drive because of fatigue, a range of manager reactions were reported including understanding and support as well as not taking fatigue seriously.

Some of the managers mentioned the difficulty to monitor what van drivers did when leaving the company premises and felt there was a lack of control over the driver. Some companies tapped into other road users' opinions on the drivers' behaviour through participation in the 'How's my driving' scheme and felt this to be a successful tool to regain control over the driver. One manager verbally appealed to his drivers, who were also his friends, to drive responsibly whilst out on the road and a few companies had tracking systems installed in their vans. Answers to similar problems in the LGV industry have been found in technology, e.g. the regulation of driving time through incident black boxes, tachographs or the technical limitation of trucks' maximum speed to the allowed speed limit.

### **Small versus larger companies**

Smaller companies differed from larger companies mainly in two respects:

- The degree of formalisation of procedures
- The length of communication channels.

Larger companies were often reported to have a dedicated fleet/transport or health and safety officer, whereas in small businesses, the managing director typically covered a range of roles and activities including the management of occupational road risk. These self-employed managers often reported high workloads and expressed concern about the increase of health and safety legislation that would divert them from their 'real' job and pose an additional workload. Some also felt that additional health and safety requirements such as the management of occupational road risk of van drivers would increase the costs for the business and consequently increase the price for the customer.

The small businesses often carried out activities in the realm of managing work-related road risk, e.g. had stringent vehicle maintenance schemes in place or planned journeys in such a way as to avoid schools, rush hours or busy roads. Small businesses' perception of managing occupational road risk as an additional burden to the business is thus frequently based on a misperception of what this might require. Promotions of managing work-related road risk specifically for smaller businesses could be successful, if they pointed out to the manager, that this entailed many of the activities that they already carried out and that e.g. risk assessments should be appropriate to the circumstances of the organisation and did not have to be over complex or technical.

One characteristic and benefit of small companies laid in the short communication channels and frequent contact between managers and drivers. This particularly showed in the comparison of interviews with drivers and with managers. Managers of small businesses were usually aware of changes in their employees' private life (e.g. baby) and would accommodate for this in the work schedule. They were also better positioned to detect alcohol and drug problems in their employees and to take appropriate action.

### **Van features**

Vans are work vehicles. This has been confirmed in the finding that all participants, regardless of their company backgrounds chose 'fit for purpose' as their main determinant for purchase decisions. Interviewees who drove the same van on a fixed basis expressed more satisfaction with their vans and

took better care of them compared to those participants driving different vans from a vehicle fleet. Overall the attitude towards vans as work vehicles was predominantly positive. The perception of the van was predominantly one of a workhorse.

None of the participants reported their vans to feature adaptive cruise control and only very few reported to have electronic stability program or traction control. ABS was the most frequently reported primary safety system across all groups. With regard to secondary safety systems, seat belts were standard in all vans and airbags (at least for the driver) were present in the majority of cases. Overall, the majority of van users reported rather basic van equipment. A large proportion of interviewees reported driving Ford Transits at work.

A considerable proportion of participants across the four groups reported preferring a van to a car even for everyday motoring purposes and attributed this to the advantage of sitting higher up and having a better view of the road. Improvements most frequently sought for across all groups were comfort features such as air conditioning or better all-round visibility through bigger/ additional mirrors or reversing sensors.

Information sources and factors in the buying decision differed considerably between interviewees. Proximity of a dealer or garage seemed to be important for most participants.

To identify robust trends between different user groups a bigger sample and a quantitative methodology would be needed.

### **Future research and outlook**

As with all data from self-report, the researcher has limited control over the extent to which an interviewee speaks the truth. Especially when asking questions on behaviours that deviate from social norms, the researcher has to be aware of the social desirability bias, a tendency of the interviewee to describe himself in socially more desirable terms than what corresponds with the truth. In the present study, this could result in an under-reporting of the violation of safe driving behaviour and an over-reporting of interest and initiative in managing work-related road risk. In the depth interviews with van drivers, the researchers had aimed at identifying actual behaviour that would support or contradict the interviewees' stated opinions and has pointed towards apparent inconsistencies in the report. Similarly, differences between managers' and employees' perceptions were highlighted for three companies where both types of interviews took place.

The present qualitative study has provided a first indication of characteristics of different groups of van drivers, and has also pointed out that there is great variability between organisations and individuals using vans for work. The next step would be on the basis of these findings to investigate the prevalence of these characteristics and van driver groups with a representative sample of drivers, e.g. by means of a postal survey. A quantitative approach could demonstrate the prevalence of the issues around van driving identified in the qualitative study, such as mobile phone use, incidents of fatigue or medical fitness problems. In-depth accident studies could be carried out using contributory factors information and details collected 'at the scene' to understand the causes and circumstances surrounding accidents involving vans. To develop sensible policies and tailored road safety interventions for van users the knowledge of the extent of the problem, of how organisations or individual van drivers work, what particular information they need and how it should be presented is essential. What this study has demonstrated is the need for raising awareness of occupational road safety issues in organisations and individuals using vans for work.

## Acknowledgements

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## 5 Appendix

### 5.1 Manager interview

#### **Van study for the AA Motoring Trust Interview with health and safety/transport managers with responsibility for company van drivers**

##### **INTRODUCTION**

Interviewer introduction.

Thank interviewee for his/her time and explain purpose of the project:

- Over the last few years, vans have become very popular as work and freight vehicles and their numbers have increased considerably. At the same time, relatively little is known about what companies with van fleets do to minimise their employees' risk when driving vans at work. Therefore, the AA Motoring Trust has asked TRL to carry out research on vans and work-related road risk.
- Managing work-related road risk means to do all that's reasonably possible to ensure the safety of a person driving a vehicle for work purposes.

Explain purpose of the interview:

- This interview aims at establishing how occupational road risk of van drivers is currently managed in your company, including examples of good practice and organisational or personal circumstances that can act as barriers to good practice. I also want to find out what features you find particularly important in work vans.

Timings:

- The interview should take approximately 50 minutes.

Confidentiality

- Feel free to say anything you like during the course of this interview. This interview is confidential.
- With your consent this interview will be tape recorded for purpose of transcription. However, all information (e.g. notes and recordings) will be used for TRL's research only.
- Your and your company's name will not be used in any way, and no one will be able to find out what you have said. After we have analysed what you have told us, we will destroy all information (e.g. tape recordings) that can be used to identify you.

Results:

- If you wish you will receive a summary of the findings from this study.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

*At first I am going to ask you a few questions about your company and your role in the company.*

**1. What is your company's name?** *(This is for TRL's internal use only)*

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. What is your position/job title?** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Do you work as a dedicated health and safety/transport manager or do you also have other roles in you company?**

**If you also have other roles, what are they?** \_\_\_\_\_

If no, go to next question.

**4. Do you have access to a computer at work?**

' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know

**5. Which business sector does you company operate in?** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. How many employees work in your company?** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. How many vans have you got in your company?** \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Are the vans in your company**

' leased ' company-owned or ' privately owned by the employees?

**9. Do any of the employees drive their own vans for work purposes?**

' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know

**10. Do you use any other vehicle types for work purposes in your company?**

**If yes, which ones (e.g. HGV, cars, motorbikes, other)?**

If no, continue with next question.

**11. Do you allow your employees to use company vans for private purposes?**

' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know



**If yes, how popular is this?** \_\_\_\_\_

If no, continue with next question.

**12. What tasks do vans in your company undertake?** \_\_\_\_\_

**13. How many employees, who drive vans for work purposes, do you have responsibility for?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**14. Do you make use of agency van drivers in your company?**

' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know



Obtain additional information on agency drivers:

- What percentage of all van drivers do agency van drivers make up?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How do agency van drivers compare to company van drivers with regard to accident frequencies? \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you check agency van drivers' licences? \_\_\_\_\_
- Anything else you want to say about van drivers? \_\_\_\_\_

## MANAGEMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL ROAD RISK OF VAN DRIVERS

*I will now ask you questions on how work-related road risk of van drivers is managed in your company.*

### 1. Management and systems

**1. What comes immediately to your mind when thinking about work-related road risk?**

**2. Do you think you have systems in place that work and sufficiently cover the safety of your drivers?**

**3. Do you think managing work-related road risk is an additional workload on top of other, more and possibly more important responsibilities?**

*(Ask them why they agree or disagree and let them explain their opinion)*

**4. Please describe what rules and procedures do you have in place in your company with regard to driving vans at work?**

*(Prompt for guidelines on drugs, alcohol, mobile phone use, maximum working/driving time if not mentioned).*

**5. Is there a written safety policy that specifically covers at-work van driving?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**If no, why not?** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Do rules and procedures for van driving at work differ from rules for other vehicle types, e.g. company cars and HGVs?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know



**If yes, in what way?** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Do you carry out risk assessments on work-related van driving in your company?**

' No                    ' Yes                    ' Don't know

More specifically:



• **What do these risk assessments cover (e.g. drivers, vehicles and journeys)?**

\_\_\_\_\_

• **How often do you carry them out?** \_\_\_\_\_

• **Do you forward the results to the drivers?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

• **What do you do with the results?**

\_\_\_\_\_

• **How do you manage risks that you have identified?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**8. How do you think does your company compare to other companies you have heard of with regard to managing work-related road safety of van drivers?**

*Probe: In what way is company better? In what way is it worse?*

**9. What are the factors that make it easy/difficult in your company to change towards safer practises with regard to van driving at work?**

**10. As a manager, what do you find most challenging in managing work-related road risk of van drivers?**

**12. How is the competence of managers in dealing with occupational road risk ensured in your company? Please describe.**

*Prompt for training, self-tuition, supervision etc.*

**13. Do you have enough resources to manage work-related road risk effectively?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**14. Do you have problems keeping up to date with guidance and finding information on managing work-related road risk and legislation related to it?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**15. With regard to managing occupational road risk, are agency drivers, drivers of subcontractors or drivers who don't speak English very well a problem?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**16. Do you find it difficult to change attitudes and behaviours in company vehicle drivers**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**17. What information on work-related van driving do you collect on a regular basis?**

- Vehicle kilometres                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Driving time                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Fuel consumption                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Accidents                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Incidents                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Penalty points                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Parking tickets                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

' Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**18. Do you use particular systems to monitor van driving, e.g. vehicle tracking?**

**19. Do you investigate van driver accidents? If yes, please explain what you do and how you use the information obtained.**

**20. Are parking or speeding offences in relation with van driving (e.g. when making a delivery) a major problem in your company?**

Parking:  ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

Speeding:  ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

→ **If yes for either of the two, please describe how they are dealt with.**

**21. Do you have van maintenance schedules in place? Please describe briefly.**



## **2. Journey planning and information provision**

**1. Who is responsible for setting work schedules in your company?**

**2. Do you think that driving schedules provide enough time for the safe operation of the work vans (e.g. complying with speed limits, securing load or vehicle checks before departure)?**

**3. When sending a van driver to other destinations, what information does he receive on his destination prior to departure?**

*If not reported before, ask for:*

- Risk assessment of destination:                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Parking facilities at destination:                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Road layout at destination:                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Details of a contact person:                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**4. Can you contact van drivers whilst they are out driving?**

*Prompt for mobile phones in vans (hand-held versus hands free) and policy on their use.*

## **3. Driver workload and fitness**

**1. What happens if a van driver arrives at his destination later than expected?**

**2. What would happen in your company if a van driver reported to be too tired to drive?**

**3. What do you do in your company to ensure people driving work vehicles are fit to drive?**

## **4. Driver competence and training**

**1. When recruiting a new employee, how do you ascertain his competence as a van driver? Please describe.**


*If not reported before, ask for:*

- Driver licence check (ask if at regular intervals):  
' Yes, every: \_\_\_\_\_ ' No                    ' Don't know
- Medical assessment (ask if at regular intervals):  
' Yes, every: \_\_\_\_\_ ' No                    ' Don't know
- Psychometric test:                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Minimum van driver age:                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

*Details for any of the above, if answered yes:*

**2. Do the requirements differ for full-time versus occasional van drivers?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

 If yes, in what way: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Do you have an induction procedure for van drivers in your company?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**If yes, what does it include and how much time is set aside for it?**

---

*If not reported before, ask for:*

- Buddy system:                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- General health/safety introduction ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Driver handbook/information pack: ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**4. Who of the following groups receives an induction to driving in your company:**

- Full-time van drivers                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Part-time van drivers                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Occasional van drivers                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Agency van drivers                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**5. Do you have driver training programme for van drivers in your company?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know



**If yes, what does it cover? Please describe.**

---

*If not reported before, ask for:*

- Risk factors (e.g. fatigue, mobiles etc):                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Securing load/loading:                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Vehicle checks and maintenance                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Driver awareness:                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know
- Defensive driving:                    ' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**6. Who participates in driver training in your company?**

' All drivers                    ' Accident prone drivers                    ' High exposure drivers  
 ' New drivers                    ' Drivers bad risk assessments

**7. How do you assess the effectiveness of the training?**

**8. Do you have refresher training in your company?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

If yes, details on refresher training: \_\_\_\_\_

## **5. Safety culture**

**1. When thinking of occasions when van drivers in your company don't comply with the company procedures and guidance (e.g. speeding), what do you think are the reasons for this?**

**2. How do you encourage the use of safe practises in company van drivers?**

**3. How do you monitor if van drivers comply with company rules and procedures? How do you deal with incidents of unsafe behaviour?**

*Prompt if van driver compliance is a problem and if driver attitudes are different in full-time versus occasional drivers.*

## **6. Crime and driver safety**

**1. Did you ever have any incidents in your company, where one of your staff was threatened or robbed whilst driving his/her van at work?**

**If yes, please explain what happened.**

*If not, please go to the next question*

## **FEATURES OF WORK-VANS**

**1. Which of the following active safety features do your company vans have?**

- Anti-Lock Braking System      ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Electronic Stability Program    ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Adaptive Cruise Control        ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Traction Control System        ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Reversing/parking sensors      ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know

Other, please state: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Which of the following passive safety features do your company vans have?**

- Driver/passenger airbag      ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Seat belts for all occupants    ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Safety Steering column        ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Other, please state: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Do your company vans have**

- Dividing walls                ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Lashing points                ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Alarm systems                ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Central locking                ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know

**4. What features in vans do you find particularly important when buying new work vans?**

**5. Can you briefly describe how you decide, what van to buy?**

**6. What information sources do you use to inform yourself on vans during the buying process?**

*Prompt: the dealer, brochures, recommendations, other sources*

**7. Out of the following list, can you please choose the three features that would influence your choice the most if you were to buy a van?**

- ' Fit for purpose (e.g. load volume)
- ' Price
- ' Van age
- ' Brand
- ' Colour
- ' Safety
- ' Ergonomic design/comfort

**CONCLUSION**

- Ask for any important issues that haven't been covered in the interview

- Thank interviewee for his/her time and effort
- Tell interviewee that they can receive a summary of the findings if they wish.

**5.2 Self-employed van driver interview**

**Van study for the AA Motoring Trust**

**Interviews with self-employed van drivers (dedicated drivers or tradesmen)**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Interviewer introduction (i.e. name and relationship with TRL).
2. Thank interviewee for his/her time and explain purpose of the project:
  - Over the last few years, vans have become very popular as work and freight vehicles and their numbers have increased considerably. At the same time, relatively little is known about what businesses with work-vans do to minimise the risk associated with driving a van for work-purposes. Therefore, the AA Motoring Trust has asked TRL to carry out research on vans and work-related road risk. I (Brian Regan) am acting as an interviewer on TRL's behalf.
  - Managing work-related road risk means to do all that's reasonably possible to ensure the safety of a person driving a vehicle for work purposes.
3. Explain purpose of the interview:
  - This interview aims at establishing how you in your business currently manage occupational road risk when driving your van for work-purposes. This includes examples of good practice and organisational or personal circumstances that can act as barriers to good practice. I also want to find out what features you find particularly important in work vans.
4. Timings:
  - The interview should take approximately 50 minutes.
5. Confidentiality
  - Feel free to say anything you like during the course of this interview. This interview is confidential.
  - With your consent this interview will be tape recorded for purpose of transcription. However, all information (e.g. notes and recordings) will be used for TRL's research only.

- Your and your businesses name will not be used in any way, and no one will be able to find out what you have said. After we have analysed what you have told us, we will destroy all information (e.g. tape recordings) that can be used to identify you.

6. Results:

- If you wish you will receive a summary of the findings from this study.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

*At first I am going to ask you a few questions about your business and your role in it.*

**1. What is the name of your business? (This is for TRL's internal use only)** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. What is your job title?** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. What is your main role in the business?**

**If you also have other roles, what are they?** \_\_\_\_\_

*If no, go to next question.*

**4. Do you have access to a computer at work?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**5. Which industry sector does your business operate in?** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Do you have any employees in your business?**

**If yes, how many?** \_\_\_\_\_

*If no, go to next question.*

**7. How many vans have you got in your business?** \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Is/are the van(s) you use in your business**

' Leased                    ' Self-owned                    ' Other, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Do you drive your work van full-time, part-time or only occasionally?**

**10. Do you use your work van for private purposes?**

' Yes                    ' No

**11. Do you use any other vehicle types for work purposes in your business?**

**If yes, which ones (e.g. HGV, cars, motorbikes, other)?**

*If no, continue with next question.*

**12. If you have employees in your business, do you allow them to use company vans for private purposes?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know



**If yes, how popular is this?** \_\_\_\_\_

*If no, continue with next question.*

**13. What tasks do you use your work van for?** \_\_\_\_\_

**14. Do you make use of agency van drivers in your business?**

' Yes                    ' No                    ' Don't know

**15. Can you please briefly describe, what your standard work days looks like?**

## MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL ROAD RISK

*I will now ask you questions on how you manage occupational road risk associated with van driving in your business.*

### **1. Management and systems**

**1. What immediately comes into your mind when thinking of work-related road safety?**

**2. Do you think you have systems in place that work and sufficiently cover your safety when driving your work-van?**

**3. Do you think managing work-related road risk is an additional workload on top of other, more and possibly more important responsibilities?**

*(Ask them why they agree or disagree and let them explain their opinion)*

**4. Please describe what rules and procedures do you have in place in your business with regard to driving your van for work purposes?**

*(Prompt for guidelines on drugs, alcohol, mobile phone use, maximum working/driving time if not mentioned).*

**5. More specifically, do you have a written safety policy in your business that also covers van driving at work?**

If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

**6. How do you make sure that you are competent to manage occupational road risk?**

*If not mention, ask for*

- Participation in training courses (e.g. on risk assessments)
- Networking with colleagues, trade associations etc.
- Self-taught through internet search etc.

**7. Do you have enough resources to manage work-related road risk in your business effectively?**

**8. Do you carry out risk assessments on work-related van driving in your business?**

**If yes:**

- How often do you carry them out? \_\_\_\_\_
- What do they cover (driver, journey, van) \_\_\_\_\_
- How do you use the results of risk assessments? \_\_\_\_\_
- How do you manage risks that you have identified? \_\_\_\_\_

*If no, go to next question.*

**9. How do you think does your business compare to other businesses you have heard of with regard to managing work-related road safety of van driving?**

*(Ask them why they think so)*

**10. What are the factors that make it easy/difficult in your business to change towards safer practises with regard to van driving at work?**

*(If not mentioned, prompt for lack of resources (time, money, staff) or lack of knowledge about legal requirements, changing attitudes of colleagues/staff)*

**11. What information on work-related van driving do you collect on a regular basis?**

- Vehicle kilometres                      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know

- Driving time ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Fuel consumption ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Accidents ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Incidents ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Penalty points ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Parking tickets ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- ' Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Have you ever had an accident whilst driving your van at work? Please briefly describe what happened.**

**13. Do you have a procedure in place for dealing with accidents when driving your work van? Please describe.**

**14. Do you have a camera in your van to take pictures in the case of an accident?**

**15. What types of accidents happen most frequently in your business in connection with driving a work van? Why, in your opinion, do they happen?**

**16. Is parking in relation with van driving (e.g. when visiting a client) a major problem in your business?**

**If yes, how do you deal with it?**

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**17. What maintenance schedules for work vans do you have in place in your business?**

**18. What checks of safety critical van features such as tyres, lights etc. do you carry out and how frequently do you do this?**

## **2. Journey planning and information provision**

**1. When driving your van at work, what information (on journey and destination) do you collect prior to the trip?**

*If not reported before, ask for:*

- Risk assessment of destination: ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Parking facilities at destination: ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Road layout at destination: ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Details of a contact person: ' Yes ' No ' Don't know

**2. Who is responsible for setting driving/work schedules in your business?**

**3. Do your work schedules provide enough time for the safe operation of your work van (e.g. complying with speed limits, securing load or vehicle checks before departure)?**

**4. When you plan journeys, do you allow time for regular rest breaks?**

**5. Would you book an overnight stay at a hotel to avoid driving long hours?**

**6. Are you contactable whilst driving at work? How?**

*Prompt for mobile phones in vans (hand-held versus hands free) and policy on their use when driving for work.*

**7. How do you learn about e.g. changes in legislation that affect van driving in your business (e.g. change in seat belt wearing requirements since March 2005<sup>4</sup>, mobile phone use)?**

---

<sup>4</sup> The wearing of front seat restraints has been compulsory since January 1983. However, as vans are frequently used for local deliveries several EU Member States introduced exemptions for the seat belt use requirements on

*If not mentioned before, ask for*

- Professional bodies, e.g. trade associations ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Colleagues ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- internet ' Yes ' No ' Don't know

### **3. Driver workload and Fitness**

**1. What happens if you are running late for an appointment?**

**2. How much pressure do you feel to keep agreed arrival times?**

**3. Does your driving change when you are running late?**

**4. Would you cancel an appointment if you felt too tired to drive?**

**5. Have you ever fallen asleep or been very tired whilst driving your van at work?**

**If yes, please describe the circumstances of that journey (time of day, road type, purpose of the journey)**

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**6. Do you sometimes have to make trips at night or very early in the morning?**

**7. Have you ever driven despite feeling ill? Please describe.**

**8. Do you ever eat/drink whilst driving?**

**If yes, how often does that happen?**

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**9. Do you sometimes read maps or instructions, whilst driving?**

**10. Do you have regular health checks, especially eyesight test in relation with driving at work?**

### **4. Driver competence and training**

**1. Do you have an induction procedure for new employees using work-vans in your business?**

**If yes, please answer the following:**

- Who is responsible for the induction?
- Who participates in an induction?
- How long does it take?
- What does it cover?
- What materials are given to the driver?
- What checks/references do you ask for from new employees?

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**2. Do you have a familiarisation period for new work van types? Please describe.**

**3. Have you ever participated in a driver training course in relation with driving for work purposes?**

**If yes, what did the course cover?**

*If not mentioned, ask for the following:*

---

convenience grounds. Recent changes to EU Directives have imposed belt use requirements for van drivers and passengers as of March 2005. The seat belt exemption for delivery drivers now only applies when travelling 50m or less between deliveries or collections.



- risk factors, e.g. bad weather driving
- loading vans
- routine vehicle checks
- mobile phone use

**If yes, what aspects of the training had an effect on your every day driving at work?**

**If yes, what else would you have found useful?**

*If no, go to the next question.*

**4. Do you have refresher training in your business? Please describe.**

### **5. Safety culture**

**1. Think of an occasion when you didn't comply with safe driving rules (e.g. speeding)? Why did this happen?**

**2. What other factors could account for non-compliance with safe driving rules?**

**3. How do you monitor, if your employees drive safely and comply with the rules?**

### **6. Crime and driver safety**

**1. Did you ever have any incidents in your company, where one of your staff was threatened or robbed whilst driving his/her van at work?**

**If yes, please explain what happened.**

*If not, please go to the next question*

## **FEATURES OF WORK-VANS**

**1. Which of the following active safety features do your work-vans have?**

- Anti-Lock Braking System      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Electronic Stability Program      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Adaptive Cruise Control      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Traction Control System      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Reversing/parking sensors      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- ' Other, please state: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Which of the following passive safety features do your work-vans have?**

- Driver/passenger airbag      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Seat belts for all occupants      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Safety Steering column      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Other, please state: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Do your work-vans have**

- Dividing walls                      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Lashing points                      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Alarm systems      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know

- Central locking ' Yes ' No ' Don't know

**4. How would you describe your attitude towards your work van?**

*Probe, if not mentioned:*

Is it more of a mere work tool or almost a workmate?

Do you care about dents in the work van?

**5. What features in vans do you find particularly important when buying new work-vans? Please describe.**

**6. Can you briefly describe how you decide, what van to buy?**

*Prompt, if not mentioned:*

Would you buy an old or a new one?

**7. What information sources do you use to inform yourself on vans during the buying process?**

*Prompt: the dealer, brochures, recommendations, other sources*

**8. What do you think in general about vans (non-work related)? Please describe why you would like or why you wouldn't like to drive a van for everyday motoring activities.**

**9. Out of the following list, can you please choose the three features that would influence your choice the most if you were buying a van?**

- ' Fit for purpose (e.g. load volume) ' Price ' Van age
- ' Brand ' Colour ' Safety ' Ergonomic design/comfort

**CONCLUSION**

- Ask for any important issues that haven't been covered in the interview

- Thank interviewee for his/her time and effort
- Tell interviewee that they can receive a summary of the findings if they wish.

**5.3 Employed van driver interview**

**Van study for the AA Motoring Trust**

**Interview for employed van drivers (dedicated and non-dedicated)**

**INTRODUCTION**

7. Interviewer introduction (i.e. name and relationship with TRL).
8. Thank interviewee for his/her time and explain purpose of the project:
  - Over the last few years, vans have become very popular as work and freight vehicles and their numbers have increased considerably. At the same time, relatively little is known about what companies with work-vans do to minimise their employees' risk when driving vans at work. Therefore, the AA Motoring Trust has asked TRL to carry out research on vans and work-related road risk. I (Brian Regan) am acting as an interviewer on TRL's behalf.

- Managing work-related road risk means to do all that's reasonably possible to ensure the safety of a person driving a vehicle for work purposes.
9. Explain purpose of the interview:
- This interview aims at establishing how the occupational road risk of employees driving vans for work purposes is currently managed in your company. This includes examples of good practice and organisational or personal circumstances that can act as barriers to good practice. I also want to find out what features you find particularly important in work vans.
10. Timings:
- The interview should take approximately 50 minutes.
11. Confidentiality
- Feel free to say anything you like during the course of this interview. This interview is confidential.
  - With your consent this interview will be tape recorded for purpose of transcription. However, all information (e.g. notes and recordings) will be used for TRL's research only.
  - Your and your company's name will not be used in any way, and no one will be able to find out what you have said. After we have analysed what you have told us, we will destroy all information (e.g. tape recordings) that can be used to identify you.
12. Results:
- If you wish you will receive a summary of the findings from this study.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

*At first I am going to ask you a few questions about the company you work for and your role in it.*

**1. What is the name of your company?** *(This is for TRL's internal use only)*

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. What is your job title?** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. What is your main role in the company?**

**If you also have other roles, what are they?** \_\_\_\_\_

*If no, go to next question.*

**4. Do you have access to a computer at work?**

' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know

**5. Which industry sector does your company operate in?** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. How employees work in your company?** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. How many vans does your company have approximately?** \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Are the vans in your company**

' Leased                      ' company-owned                      ' Driver-owned?

**9. Do you drive a van at work full-time, part-time or only occasionally?**

**10. Are you allowed to use the work vans for private purposes?**

' Yes                      ' No

**If no, would you like to?**

' Yes                      ' No

**11. Are there any other vehicle types used for work purposes in your company?**

' HGV ' cars ' motorbikes ' other: \_\_\_\_\_

**If yes, which other vehicles do you drive at work?**

*If no, continue with next question.*

**12. What tasks do you use work-vans in your company for?**

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**13. Can you please briefly describe, what your standard work day looks like?**

**14. Does your company make use of agency van drivers?**

Yes       No       Don't know



Obtain additional information on agency drivers:

- What percentage of all van drivers do agency van drivers make up?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How do agency van drivers compare to company van drivers with regard to accident frequencies? \_\_\_\_\_
- Anything else you want to say about agency van drivers?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL ROAD RISK**

*I will now ask you questions on how the occupational road risk of employees driving vans for work purposes is managed in your company.*

### **1. Management and systems**

**1. What comes immediately to your mind when thinking about work-related road risk?**

**2. Do you know if your company has a written safety policy for (van) drivers?**

**If yes, what does it include?** *Prompt for mobile phone use, fatigue, alcohol, (prescribed) drugs, working/driving time if not mentioned*

**If no, do you think it would be good to have one?**

**3. Do you know if the health and safety or transport managers in your company carry out risk assessments on driving at work?**

**If yes, do you know what these risk assessments cover?** *Prompt for drivers, vehicles and journeys.*

**If yes, have you seen the results of these assessments for your work vehicle or yourself?**

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**4. What information on your van driving do you have to record for the management?**

Vehicle kilometres                       Yes                       No                       Don't know

Driving time                                       Yes                       No                       Don't know

Fuel consumption                       Yes                       No                       Don't know

Accidents                                               Yes                       No                       Don't know

Incidents                                               Yes                       No                       Don't know

Penalty points                                       Yes                       No                       Don't know

Parking tickets                                       Yes                       No                       Don't know

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Did you ever have an accident whilst driving your van at work? Please describe briefly what happened.**

**6. Is there a company procedure for dealing with accidents when driving your work van? What does it include?**

**7. Do you have a camera in your van to take pictures?**

**8. Is parking the van when visiting customers (e.g. making a delivery) a major problem?**

**If yes, how are parking tickets dealt with in your company?**

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**9. What checks of safety critical van features such as tyres, lights, etc. are you supposed to carry out and how frequently do you do this?**

## **2. Journey planning and information**

**1. Who is responsible for setting driving/work schedules in your company?**

**2. Do you think that driving schedules in your company provide enough time for the safe operation of the work vans (e.g. complying with speed limits, securing load or vehicle checks before departure)?**

**3. When you drive a van for work, are you allowed time for regular rest breaks?**

**4. Does your company encourage you to book an overnight stay in a hotel to avoid driving long hours?**

**5. Do you have to be contactable when driving your van at work?**

**If yes,**

- Do you have a company/private mobile phone?      ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Is it hand-held/hands-free?                              ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Is there any rule in your company about its use?      ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Do you use it when driving your work van?            ' Yes ' No ' Don't know

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**5. When driving to a work-related destination, what information do you receive prior to departure?**

*If not reported before, ask for:*

- Risk assessment of destination:      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Parking facilities at destination:      ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Road layout at destination:                              ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know
- Details of a contact person:                              ' Yes                      ' No                      ' Don't know

## **3. Driver workload and fitness**

**1. When driving a van for work, what do you find most challenging?**

*Probe for schedules, long working hours, stress if not mentioned.*

**2. What happens if you are running late for an appointment? How is this treated by managers?**

**3. How much pressure do you feel to keep agreed arrival times?**

**4. Does your driving change when you are running late?**

**5. What would be your manager's reaction if you cancelled an appointment because you felt too tired to drive?**

**6. Have you ever fallen asleep or been very tired whilst driving your van at work?**

**If yes, please describe the circumstances of that journey (time of day, road type, purpose of the journey)**

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**7. Do you sometimes have to make trips at night or very early in the morning?**

**8. Have you ever driven despite feeling ill? Please describe.**

**9. Do you ever eat/drink whilst driving?**

**If yes, how often does that happen?**

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**10. Do you sometimes read maps or instructions, whilst driving?**

**11. Does your company have regular health checks, especially eyesight test in relation with driving at work?**

#### **4. Driver competence and training**

**1. Thinking back when you applied for your job, what information did you have to provide and/or what tests did you have to go through? Please describe.**

*Probe, if not mentioned before:*

- Was your driving licence checked? ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Were endorsements registered? ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Was your eyesight tested? ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Did you have to go through a health check? ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Did you have to do a psychometric test? ' Yes ' No ' Don't know

**2. Are driving licences in your company checked on a regular basis? Please describe.**

**3. Does your company have an induction procedure for new employees who drive a company vehicle? Please describe the induction procedure for van drivers.**

*Probe, if not mentioned before:*

- Who is responsible?
- How long does it take?
- What does it cover, e.g. general H&S introduction, buddy system etc.?
- Are any materials given to the driver?

**4. Who of the following groups receives an induction to driving in your company?**

- Full-time van drivers ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Part-time van drivers ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Occasional van drivers ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Agency van drivers ' Yes ' No ' Don't know

**5. Do you have a familiarisation period before driving a new type of van for work?**

**If yes, how long is it? Please describe.**

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**6. Have you ever participated in a driver training course in your company?**

**If yes, what did the training cover?**

- Risk factors (e.g. fatigue, mobiles etc): ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Securing load/loading: ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Vehicle checks and maintenance ' Yes ' No ' Don't know

- Driver awareness: ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Defensive driving: ' Yes ' No ' Don't know

**If yes, what aspects of the training had an effect on your every day driving at work?**

**If yes, hat else would you have found useful?**

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**7. Who participates in driver training in your company?**

- ' All drivers ' Accident prone drivers ' High exposure drivers
- ' New drivers ' Drivers bad risk assessments

**8. Do you have refresher training in you company? Please describe.**

**5. Safety culture**

**1. Do you feel you are up to date with regard to rules and guidance that affect driving at work?**

- ' Yes ' No ' Don't know

**2. How do you learn about e.g. changes in legislation that affect your job (e.g. change in seat belt wearing requirements since March 2005<sup>5</sup>, mobile phone use)?**

*If not reported before, ask for:*

- Information received from manager and format information is presented in, e.g. paper-based, presentations at group meetings etc.
- Chatting to colleagues, the internet

**3. Do you think that directors/senior managers in your company take an active interest in the safety of their van drivers?**

*(Ask them why they agree or disagree and let them explain their opinion)*

**4. How do you think does your company compare to other companies in terms of ensuring the safety of their van drivers?**

**5. What else could be done to improve the safety of van drivers in your company?**

**6. Think of an occasion when you didn't comply with the company's safe driving rules (e.g. speeding)? Why did this happen?**

**7. Have you received speeding fines when driving your van at work? If yes, how is this dealt with in your company?**

**8. How do managers in your company ensure that van drivers drive safely?**

*If not reported before, ask for:*

- Incentives to drive safely in your company (financial rewards for driving accident free, for reporting near misses etc.) ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- How is my driver scheme ' Yes ' No ' Don't know
- Tracking systems installed in vans ' Yes ' No ' Don't know

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<sup>5</sup> The wearing of front seat restraints has been compulsory since January 1983. However, as vans are frequently used for local deliveries several EU Member States introduced exemptions for the seat belt use requirements on convenience grounds. Recent changes to EU Directives have imposed belt use requirements for van drivers and passengers as of March 2005. The seat belt exemption for delivery drivers now only applies when travelling 50m or less between deliveries or collections.

## **5. Crime and driver safety**

**1. Did you ever have any incidents in your company, where one of your staff was threatened or robbed whilst driving his/her van at work?**

**If yes, please explain what happened.**

*If not, please go to the next question*

### **FEATURES OF WORK-VANS**

**1. What would you change in your van(s) at work if you were to select the van(s) and in-cab features?**

**2. Which of the following active safety features do your work-vans have?**

- Anti-Lock Braking System            ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Electronic Stability Program        ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Adaptive Cruise Control            ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Traction Control System            ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Reversing/parking sensors        ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- ' Other, please state: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Which of the following passive safety features do your work-vans have?**

- Driver/passenger airbag            ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Seat belts for all occupants        ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Safety Steering column            ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Other, please state: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Do your work-vans have**

- Dividing walls                        ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Lashing points                        ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Alarm systems                        ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know
- Central locking                        ' Yes            ' No            ' Don't know

**5. Are there features in the van you drive at work you are particularly satisfied with?**

**If yes, which ones are they?**

*If no, please go to the next question.*

**6. How would you describe your attitude towards your work van?**

*Probe, if not mentioned:*

Is it more of a mere work tool or almost a workmate?

Do you care about dents in the work van?

**7. What do you think in general about vans (non-work related)? Please describe why you would like or why you wouldn't like to drive a van for everyday motoring activities.**

**8. Out of the following list, can you please choose the three features that would influence your choice the most if you were buying a van?**

- ' Fit for purpose (e.g. load volume)            ' Price            ' Van age
- ' Brand                                                ' Colour            ' Safety            ' Ergonomic design/comfort



**9. If you were to buy a van for private use, which features would you find particularly important?**

**10. Would you buy an old or a new van if you were to buy a van for private purposes?**

## **CONCLUSION**

- Ask for any important issues that haven't been covered in the interview

- Thank interviewee for his/her time and effort
- Tell interviewee that they can receive a summary of the findings if they wish.