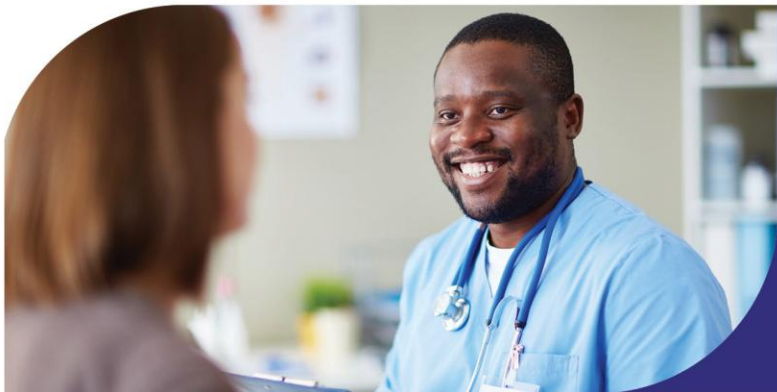




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Managing Van Fleet Essentials



Eamonn O'Sullivan
HSA Inspector

Managing Van Fleet - Essentials

- Why?
- Legal Duties
- Guidelines
- Available advice
- What next?



Prepare to break





Understanding collision causal factors



Phone distraction



Speeding



Driver fatigue



Seatbelt use



Poor weather



Medical conditions



Impairment



Towing



Safe vehicles



Secure loading



Roadworks



Mental health

**Just under 50% of
work- related
deaths
involved
vehicle**



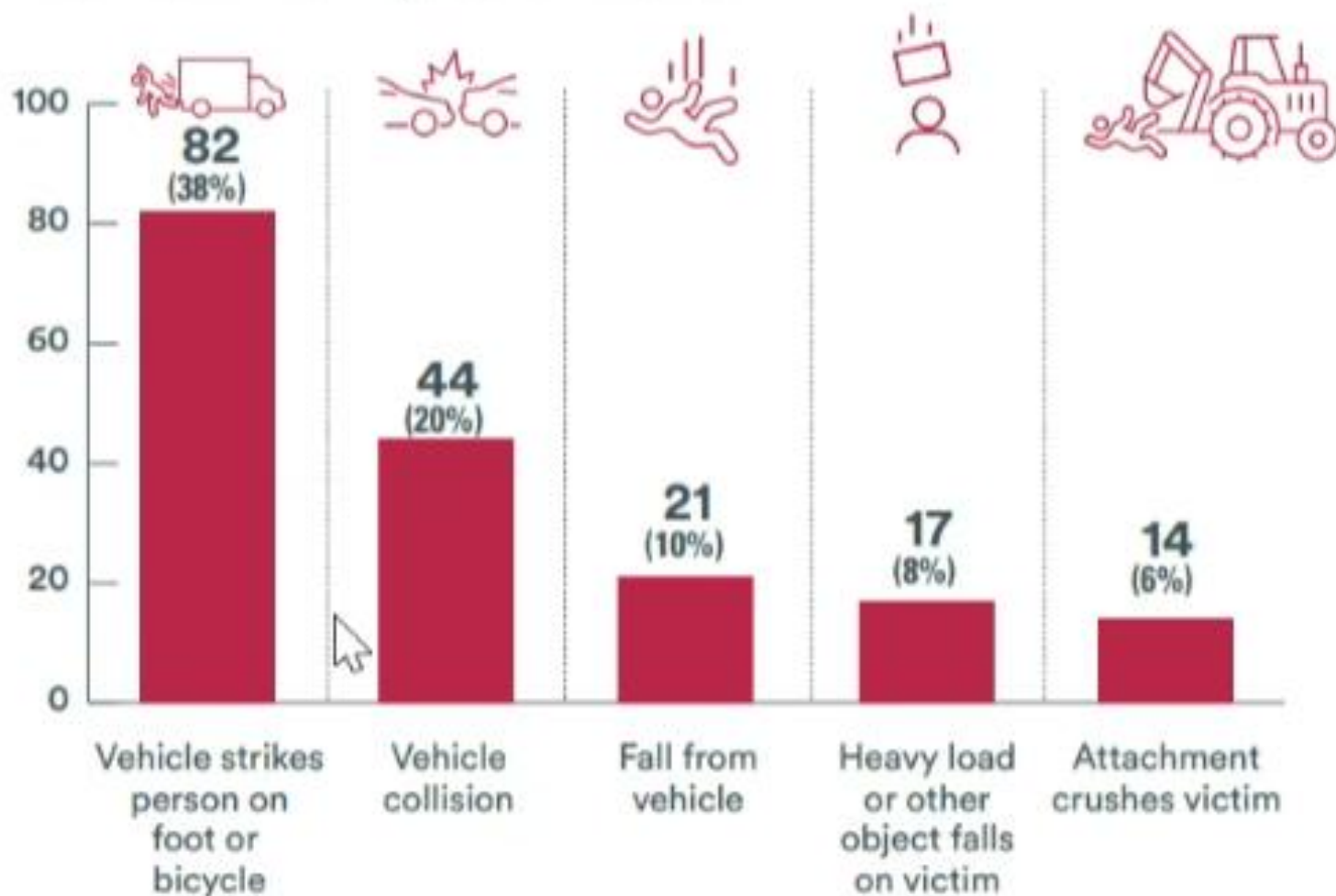
90%

deaths occurred in businesses with fewer than 50 employees

48%

deaths occurred in self-employed businesses with no employees

Most common types of incident



Most common working processes of victims at the time of incident

Cost of Doing Nothing



Vehicle Costs

- Recovery and Storage
- Repairs
- Downtime and replacement
- Reduced resale value
- Reduced leased vehicle life
- Increased insurance excess and premiums



Driver Costs

- Loss of expertise
- Loss of productivity due to absence
- Replacement driver – overtime, temp
- Medical and welfare
- Compensation
- Counselling, reassessment/training

Focus on van fleet risk management





- Many types of vans on the road
- Across all work sectors
- Different purposes
- Using road for different reasons
- At different times
- By people with varying standards of competence
- Standards of compliance vary widely

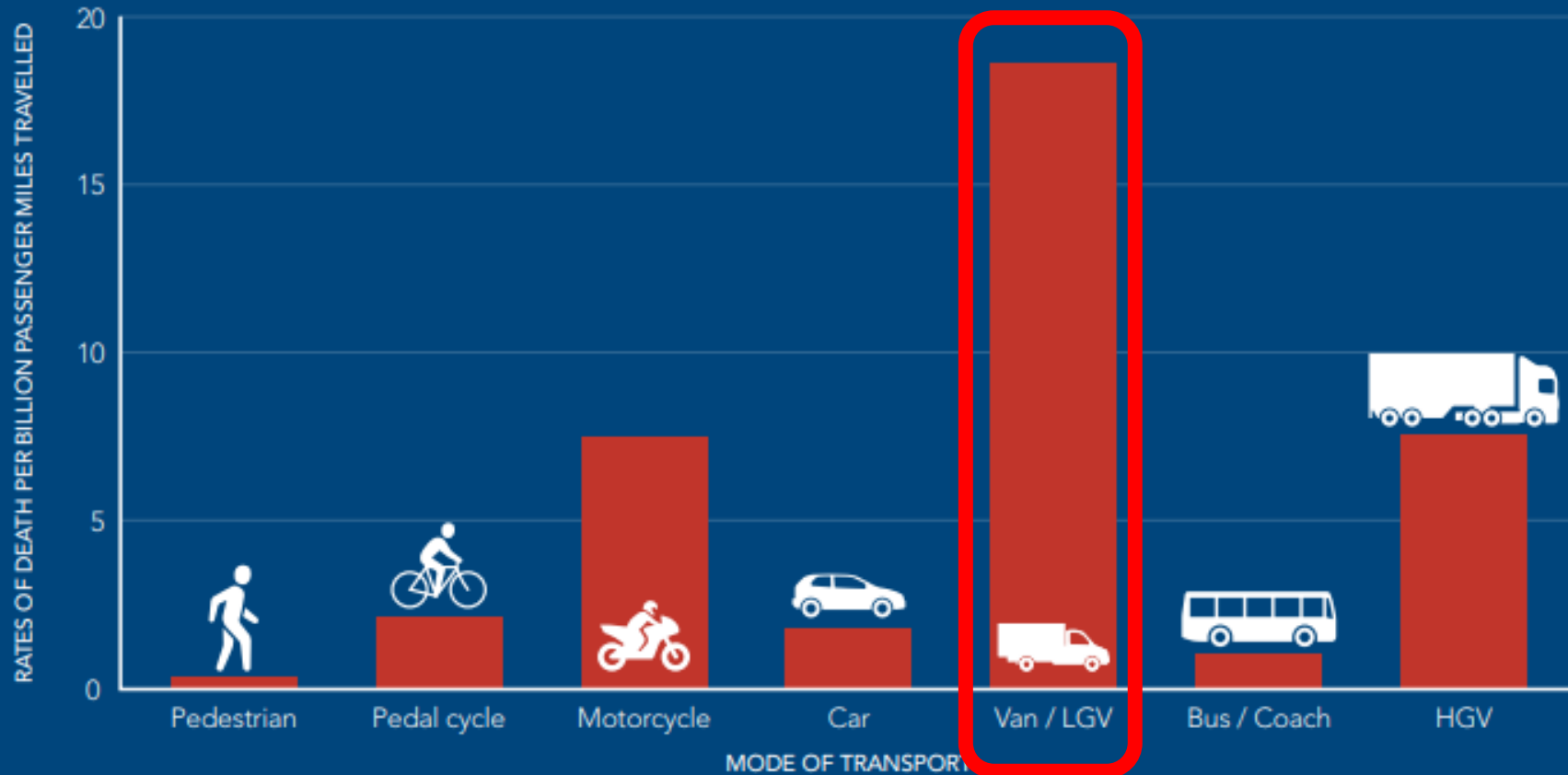


FIGURE 4

The risks to other road users from each mode, by distance travelled

Rates of road user death, by **other vehicle involved**, per billion passenger miles travelled

- Figure 4 shows only the deaths of other road users
- Vans have the highest rate of other road user deaths per mile travelled.
- HGVs are the second most dangerous vehicle type for other road users, per mile travelled



Source: Road deaths in Great Britain in 2019 (DfT, 2020)

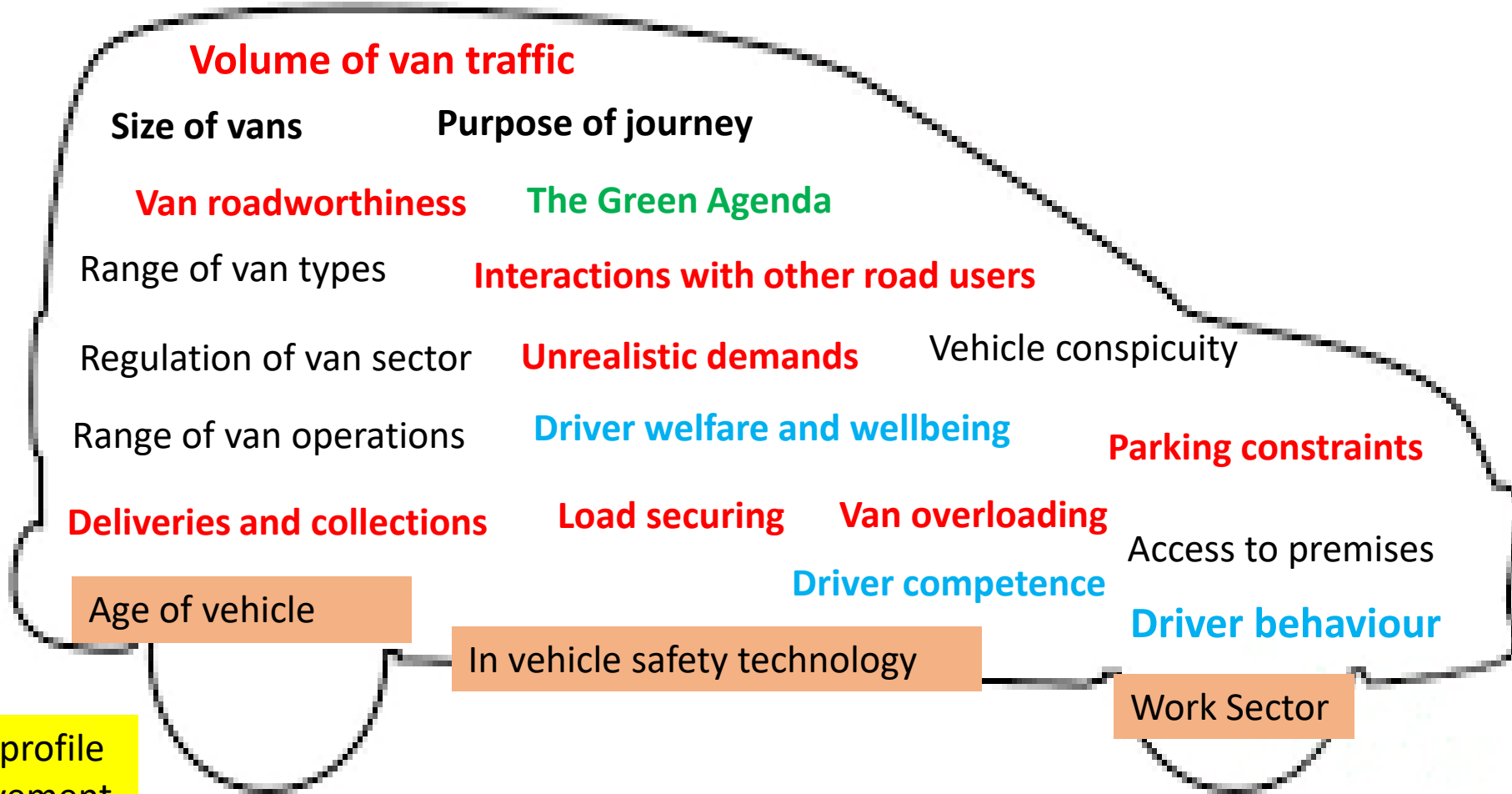
In the UK, Vans have the highest rate of other road user deaths per mile travelled.

Why van incidents happen?

- Lack of safe systems of work for van operations
- Lack of management control
- Unsafe/unsuitable/unroadworthy vehicles
- Lack of awareness
- Lack of training
- Deliberate unsafe acts
- Errors and omissions
- Killer behaviours
 - Speed
 - Distraction
 - intoxication
- Unsuitable roads infrastructure



'Vans in cities' challenges



Safety Act 2005

([Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](#))

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“place of work” includes

- any place, land or location where work
- vehicle





Driving for work program

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sustainable reduction
in numbers killed and
injured in work road
incidents



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**Driving for Work:
Risk Management
Guidance for
Employers**



Month 2025



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www.hsa.ie

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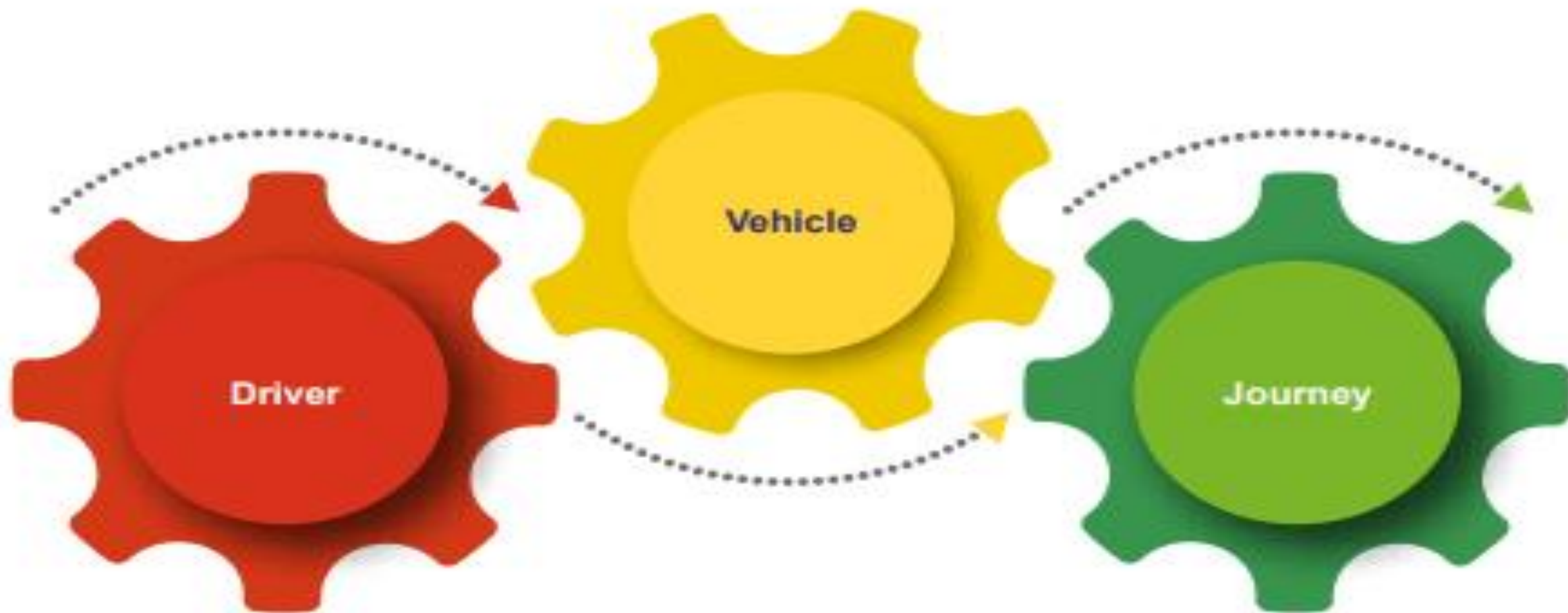
VISION
ZERO



Driving for Work: Risk Management Guidance for Employers

July 2025

Key elements in assessing driving for work risk are:



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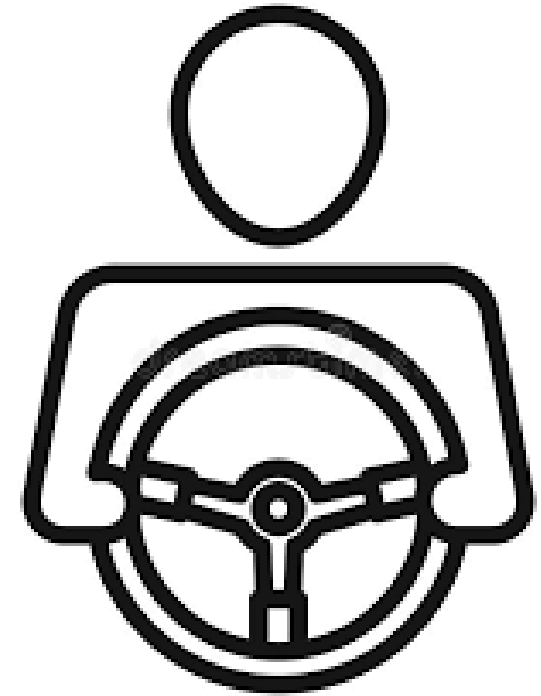
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Driver considerations

- **Licence** checks
- **Competence** and experience
- Medical **Fitness** to drive
 - Eyesight
 - Managing medical conditions
 - Impairment - Intoxicants
 - Wellbeing - Mental health
- Work **schedules**
 - Fatigue prevention



Safety Act 2005



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Section 13(g)

Employee shall make correct use of article for their protection

PPE, and safety belts!!!!





hsa.ie/slips

"Watch Your Step"

Preventing Vehicle Related Slips, Trips and Falls

MAY 2016

Vehicle related slips, trips and falls (STFs) are a leading cause of worker injury in Ireland. Workers who drive or work with trucks and vans are most affected. Drivers and transport workers climb in and out of their cabs hundreds of times a week, and routinely access the rear and sides of their vehicles using platforms and tail lifts. Transport operations often involve substances that can lead to slippery surfaces. Oil, grease, diesel, rain, snow and ice can make the conditions even more dangerous.

This information sheet will help you understand the causes of vehicle STFs and what you can do to prevent them. It is aimed at employers, the self-employed, employees, suppliers, buyers, fleet managers and anyone who drives or works with vehicles.

According to injury reports to the HSA, trucks, vans and trailers are most commonly associated with vehicle related STFs. 40% happen between the hours of 9am and 1pm. Victims are predominantly male and aged between 25 and 54. Exiting vehicles was a factor in 45% of vehicle STF injuries.

24% of vehicle related slips, trips and falls lead to an absence from work of over one month. This can have a profound impact on the individual concerned and also a negative impact on business operating costs. The average employer liability claim cost for a vehicle related STF is €25,000.

Where do vehicle STFs happen?

HSA analysis shows that the areas most associated with vehicle STFs are:

- entering and exiting vehicles, particularly HGVs and vans,
- load platforms and load area of trucks and vans,
- trailer platforms,
- 5th wheel area of HGVs,
- vehicle steps and ladders,
- vehicle tail lifts,
- road tanker platforms, and
- uneven ground and damaged surfaces where vehicles are parked.

"34 year old driver and father of two jumped from the lowest step of his HGV cab, landed on a small rock and completely blew out his knee. He wore a cast from thigh to ankle for six months, and had a chronic limp ever since – all from a 3 foot jump from his cab that landed wrong."

* EU OSHA

* European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. Extract from: A review of accidents and injuries to road transport drivers



"Watch Your Step"

Preventing Vehicle Related Slips, Trips and Falls

What causes vehicle STFs?

Most vehicle STFs are caused by:

- unsafe methods of exiting or entering vehicles and load platforms;
- unsuitable, damaged or missing steps to access vehicle areas;
- poor housekeeping leading to material lying around that is a trip hazard;
- using footwear that does not protect against injury or provide slip-resistance;
- poor vehicle and platform design and materials, in particular unsuitable steps, ladders and walk-on vehicle surfaces.



What does the law say?

Workplace health and safety law¹ says that:

- ✓ a vehicle is a workplace and, like all other workplaces, requires a written risk assessment to identify the relevant hazards and associated controls to achieve safe systems of work. Safe systems of work must include safe ways of entering and exiting a vehicle;
- ✓ designers, manufacturers, importers or suppliers of vehicles, tankers and trailers must make sure they are designed and constructed safely and provide relevant information to customers;
- ✓ suitable instruction and training must be provided to those who work in, on and around vehicles; and
- ✓ where the risk assessment identifies a need for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as safety footwear then it must be provided by the employer.

There are also additional specific legal requirements for certain classes of vehicles, such as specific slip-resistant surfaces for small and large public service vehicles.

Entering and exiting vehicles

"Never jump from a vehicle"

Entering and exiting vehicles and equipment safely is important but often overlooked. When parking you should try to avoid uneven ground, potholes, kerbs, drains, puddles and ice.

Other precautions may include:

- ✓ checking the ground conditions on approach and again before stepping out of the vehicle;
- ✓ reminding passengers to take care on entry and exit;
- ✓ changing footwear if necessary, for example slip-resistant footwear or ice grips;
- ✓ finding a space with adequate lighting, or using a torch where necessary;
- ✓ taking care to make sure you are not snagged on controls or seat belt;
- ✓ avoiding distractions from handheld devices such as phones, data loggers and scanners;
- ✓ if cab steps are not accessible, for example where vehicles have to park in tight spaces, take great care and follow a safe system to safely enter and exit the cab.

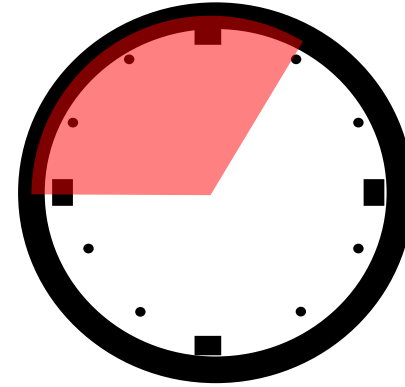


¹ Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and associated regulations.

Vehicle Slips, Trips and Falls



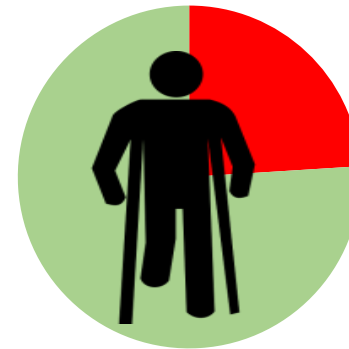
Trucks, Vans, Trailers



9am to 1pm (40%)



**Exiting vehicles
(45%)**

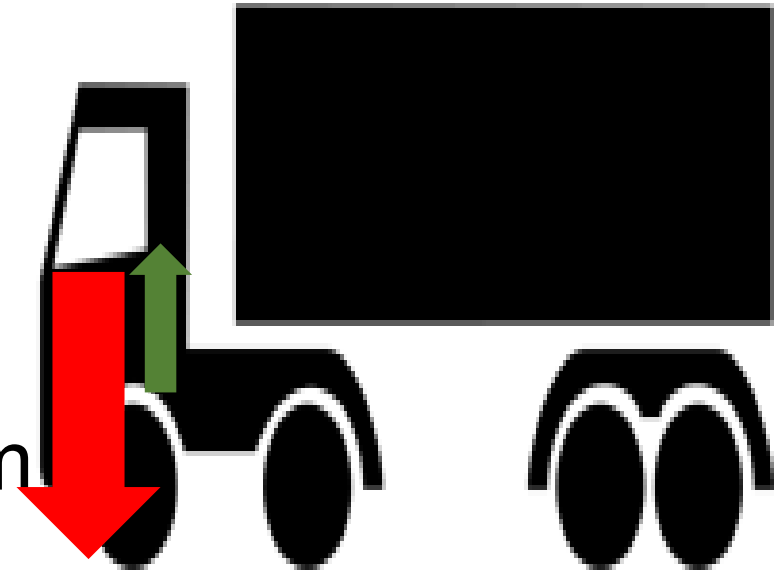


Over one month off (24%)

Exiting & entering injuries

45% Vehicle STF injuries – exiting vehicle

- Never jump from a vehicle
- Find lighting or use torch
- Check not snagged
- Avoid distractions
- If steps not accessible, safe system
- Avoid uneven ground
- Check before stepping out











**Open the Door,
Check the Floor**

Vehicle considerations

- Vehicle **selection** process
 - Vehicle safety rating [Truck NCAP]
- Vehicle pre-use **checks**
 - Roadworthiness
- Preventative **maintenance**
 - Vehicle repairs
- Vehicle **familiarisation**
 - Vehicle safety technology
 - Vehicle blind spots
- Safe **loads**
- Towing **trailers**



Van operations management starts in the workplace



Do not open
this door as it
is not secure
and will fall off
the hinges

TRANSIT

1300



Do not open
this door as it
is not secure
and will fall off
the hinges



hsa.ie/slips



Slip Risk

High

Aluminium chequerplate
***“offers poor slip resistance if
wet or contaminated”***



Journey considerations

- Work **schedules**
- Journey **planning**
 - Route selection
 - Traffic constraints
- Killer **behaviours**
 - Inappropriate speed
 - Distracted driving
 - Non-use of seat belt
 - Driving intoxicated
 - Driving fatigued
- **Weather** conditions
- **Incidents**
 - Breakdowns, punctures etc.
 - Collisions and incident recording and investigation
 - Medical emergencies



Fatigue



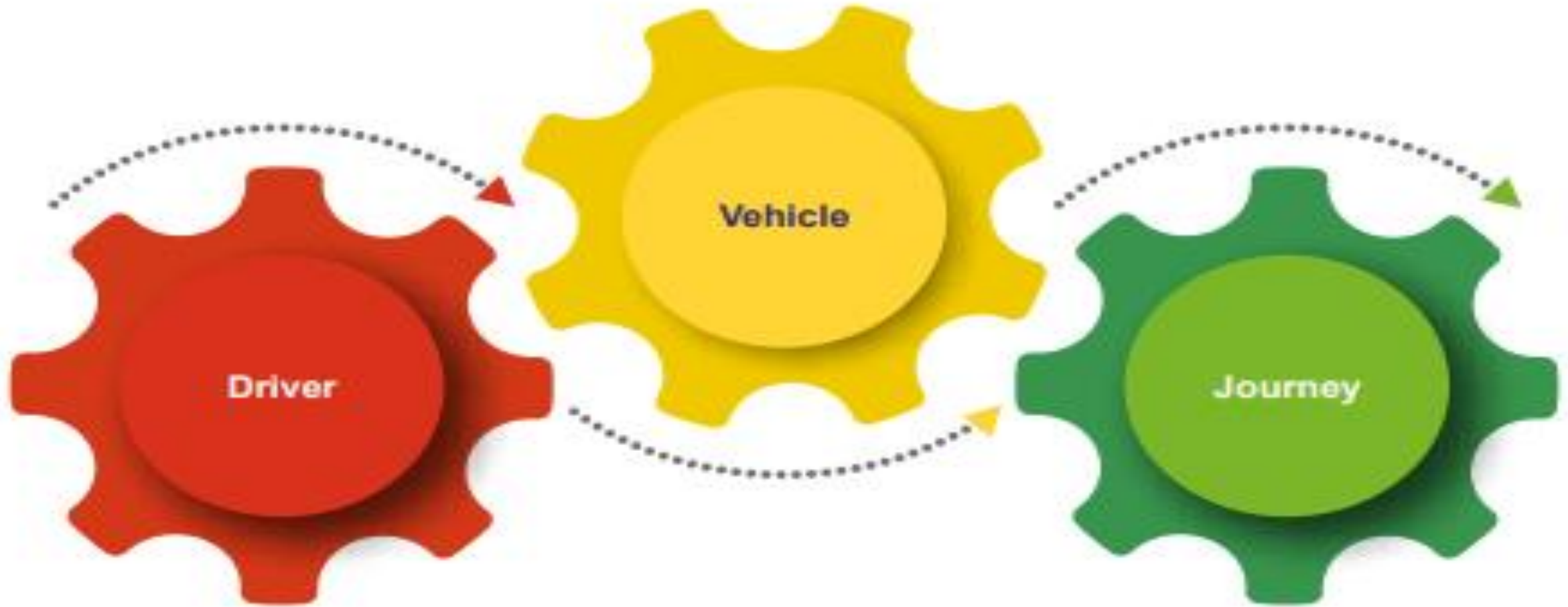
Intoxicants



No Seat Belt



Have you got all the essentials covered?



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DRIVER

Checks

Grey fleet

Training

Distractions

Intoxicants

Fatigue

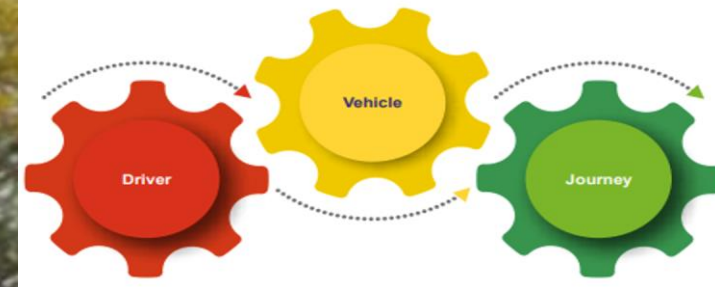
VEHICLE

Selection

Fleet Management

Safety features

Seatbelts



JOURNEY

Planning

Weather

Incidents

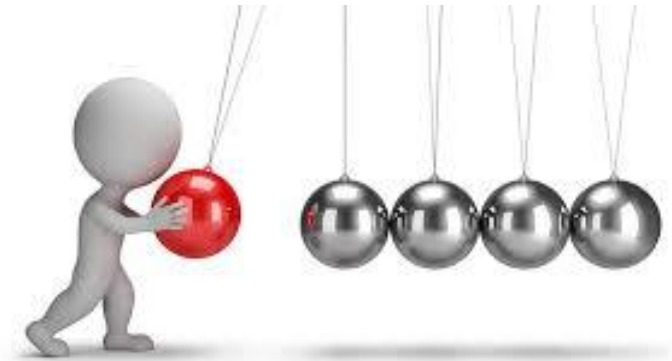
Reporting

Lone working

Speeding

Employers - must take action

- Incorporate Van Fleet Risk **Management** as part of OSH
- Include safety criteria in **procurement**
[Commercial Van Safety, Euro NCAP](#)
- Implement robust preventative **maintenance** and defect reporting
- Implement robust **driver** safety policies
 - Monitor driver behaviour
 - Set acceptable driving durations and distances
 - Put focus on 'Fitness to Drive'
 - Ensure shift patterns, journey planning and employment contracts do not contribute to unsafe driver behaviour or fatigue/stress



Help and advice is available

www.drivingforwork.ie

www.vehiclesatwork.ie

www.loadsafe.ie

Vehicles at Work Guidance & Resources



COVID-19



Docks



Driving for Work



Forklifts



eLearning



BeSMART.ie



Manual Handling



Vehicle Slips Trips & Falls



Workplace Traffic Management



Pedestrian Safety



Load Securing



Vehicle Operations



A.D.R.



Previous Transport Safety Seminars



Vehicles in Agriculture



Vehicles in Construction



Accident Reporting



Vehicle Risks Case Studies



HSA Events



Transport YouTube channel

www.drivingforwork.ie

Driving for Work – Information and Resources

We have a comprehensive collection of information and resources regarding driving for work. Please browse through the categories below.

Employer Resources



► View All

Driver Management



► View All

Vehicle Management



► View All

Learn More



► View All

Events & Seminars



► View All

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Practical templates and checklists

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Appendix A - Sample safe driving for work policy

Here is an example of a Safe Driving For Work Policy which you can amend to suit the requirements of your business. This policy applies to anyone who drives as part of their work, whether driving their own vehicle or one provided by the company.

Safe Driving for Work Policy for [enter name of business]

Date: [enter date policy is written]

To be reviewed: [enter the date you want to update it – annually is recommended]

Aim of this policy

To reduce vehicle incidents and at-fault work-related road collision costs and injuries by [determine an achievable figure and add it here] over three years by promoting a safe driving culture within the organisation.

Objectives of the policy

1. To make drivers aware of the main risks they face or create when driving for work.
2. To make sure that employees who drive vehicles in the course of their work demonstrate safe, efficient driving skills and other good road safety habits at all times.
3. To maintain all company vehicles in a safe, clean and roadworthy condition to ensure the maximum safety of the drivers, occupants and other road users, and reduce the impacts of company vehicles on the environment – this also applies to personal vehicles used for work purposes.

Code of conduct

The code of conduct for [enter name of company] states: "While driving company or own vehicles for work purposes, employees must comply with road traffic legislation, be conscious of road safety and demonstrate safe driving and other good road safety habits."

The following actions in company vehicles will be viewed as serious breaches of conduct and dismissal may be a consequence:

- drinking alcohol or being under the influence of drugs while driving;
- driving while disqualified or not correctly licenced;
- reckless or dangerous driving causing death or injury;
- failing to stop after a collision;
- acquiring penalty points leading to suspension of licence;
- any actions that warrant the suspension of a licence; and
- the use of a handheld mobile device in any vehicle whilst driving is illegal.

Appendix B - Employer risk management gap analysis checklist

The first and fundamental step is to identify driving for work activities and to understand the risks faced by your business.

A full risk inventory will help you identify the type, frequency and scale of driving for work activities that your employees are exposed to. You need to develop a profile of your drivers before you conduct a risk assessment of the activity across the business and on each employee involved.

Your responses to the questions below will guide you on gaps in your current policies and procedures and give you a good idea of the risks and exposures to your business and areas where further risk assessment and risk management improvements can be made.

Driving for Work Organisation Risk Management	Yes	No	Action
Are all directors and managers in the organisation aware of their legal obligations to manage driving for work risks?			
Is driving for work identified as a risk in your company Safety Statement?			
Have you carried out a detailed risk assessment on driving for work?			
Have appropriate controls been put in place to deal with driving for work risks for all workers affected?			
Has the company developed a clear policy and procedure on driving for work in consultation with workers?			
To accompany the policy and procedures, do you provide written instructions to workers and verify it is understood?			
Do you provide training on driving for work policy and procedures?			
Do you discuss driving for work at management and team meetings?			
Do you send safety information to workers who drive for work?			
Do you make sure that contractors that carry out work on your behalf manage driving for work risks?			

Driving for work risk assessment template

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Appendix C - Sample risk assessment template

Here is an example of a populated risk assessment template you can amend to suit the requirements of your business.

Sample template - (List additional hazards, risks and controls particular to your driving for work using this template).

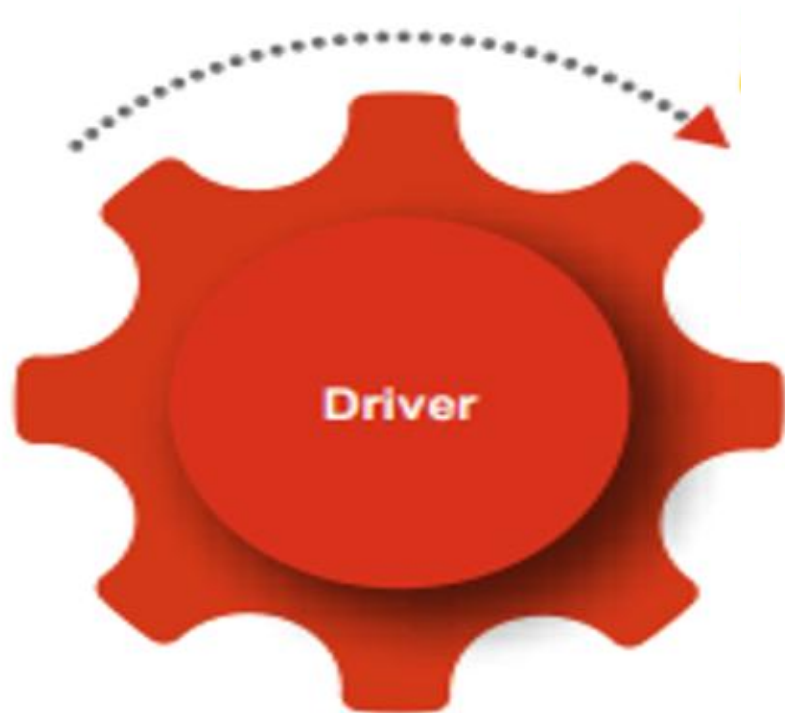
You must think about the specific hazards and control your business needs.

Hazards	Competence and suitability of the individual driver for work: • Age • Experience • Personal ability • Confidence • Fitness to drive	
Consequences of the hazard	Higher collision or incident risk owing to increased driver risk	
Risk rating High Risk (H) Medium Risk (M) Low Risk (L)	H	
Controls (when all controls are in place risk will be reduced)		Is this control in place? Y/N
	The driver has a valid licence	Y
	The driver has been driving for more than two years	N
	The driver is familiar with the vehicle they are required to drive	N
	The driver has not been suspended from driving in the last three years	N
	The driver has not been involved in any vehicle accidents in the last three years	Y
	All driving at work activities will be undertaken in accordance with the applicable legislation and driving for work policies and procedures	Y
	Fitness to drive declaration completed	Y
Action/to-do list/outstanding controls	Training required – to ensure the driver is familiar with the vehicle they are required to drive	

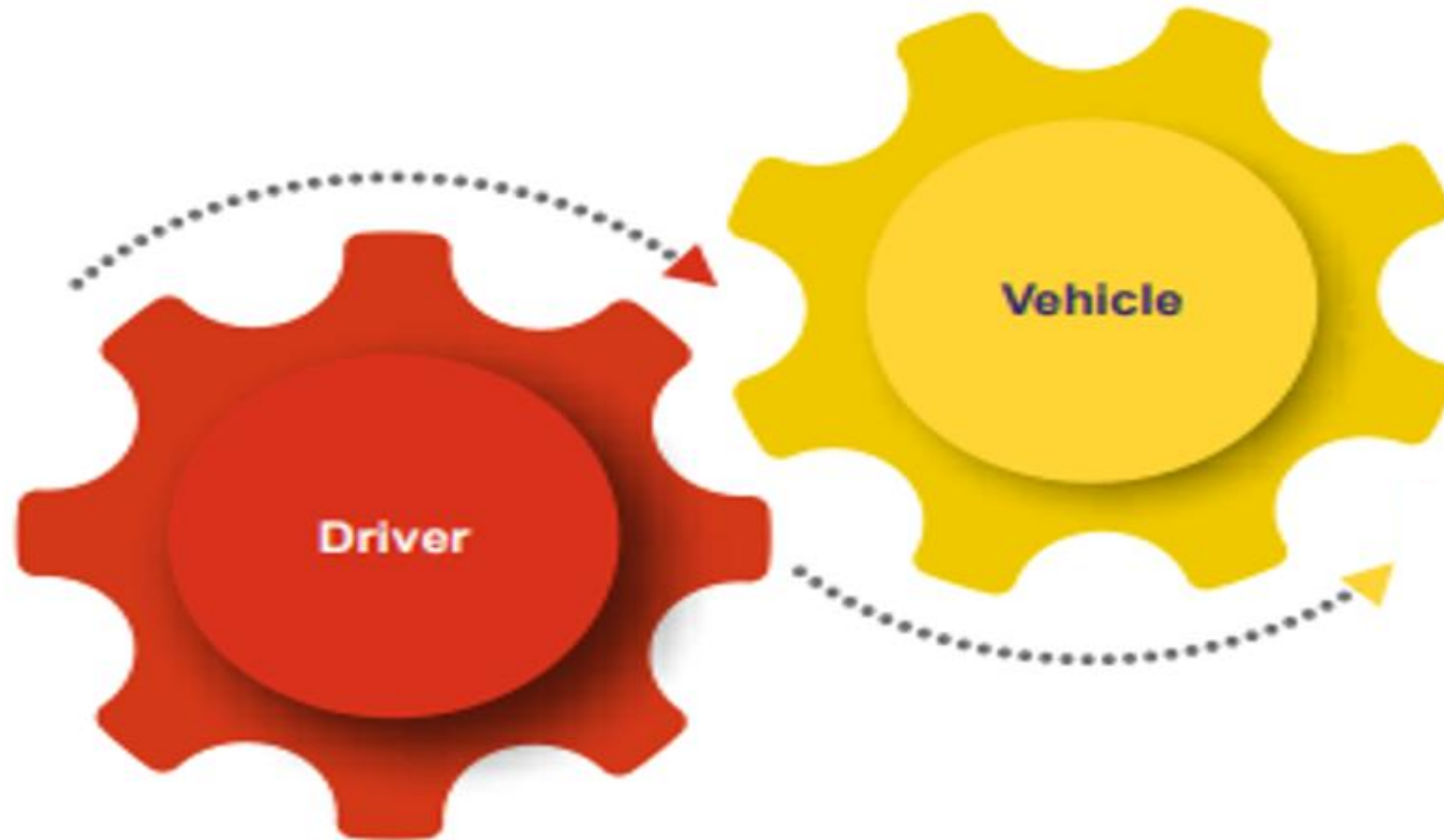
www.besmart.ie

FREE online safety statement and risk assessment builder tailored to small business needs

Next



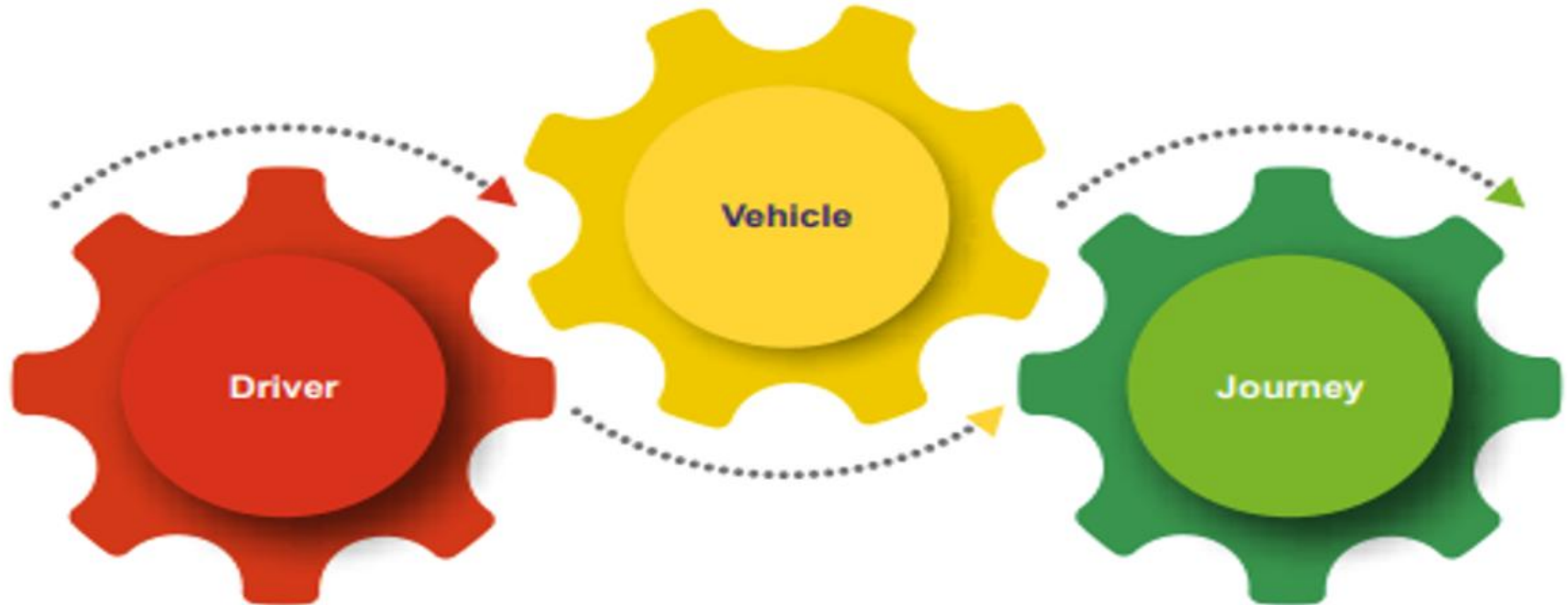
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Next

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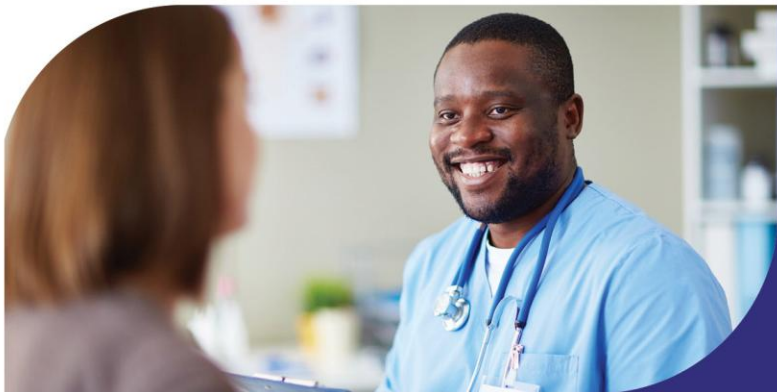




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Go raibh maith agaibh
Thank you



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