

# ITEM 10

**EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

**RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**7 NOVEMBER 2006**

**PERSONNEL UPDATE**

**Report of the Head of Business Management**

**Purpose of Report:**

To update Members on personnel issues.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Resources Committee is recommended to NOTE

- The personnel changes that have occurred, and
- The Policy for the use of Personal Vehicles on Authority Business which will be added to the Personnel Policies and Procedures.

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Since the last meeting of the Committee on 26 September 2006 the following changes have been occurred:

**Arrivals**                      None

**Departures**                      Jill Gathercole – Information Advisor (Dunster) 29.10.06

2. It is with great sadness that I have to report to the Committee the death after a short illness of Jacky Matthews, Admin Support Team Manager. She will be sadly missed by all her colleagues. Letters of condolence have been sent to her husband and to her mother.

3. The attached Policy for the use of Personal Vehicles on Authority Business has been produced. UNISON have been consulted on this Policy and are in agreement. Members are asked to note that this policy will now form part of Personnel Policies and Procedures.

**Charles Burrows**  
**Head of Business Management**



**Policy**  
**for use of**  
**Personal Vehicles on Authority Business**

# POLICY FOR USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLES ON AUTHORITY BUSINESS

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Although deaths on the roads have reduced considerably, there are still over 3000 per year. Research has indicated that a high proportion of accidents involve people driving whilst at work. This policy is the product of those two statements and expectations of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). It sets out the criteria and processes in relation to employees using their own cars in carrying out their duties. There are wide disparities between the type and amount of driving undertaken by individual employees of Exmoor National Park Authority and this is reflected in setting a range of requirements to reflect the corporate risk assessment.
- 1.2. Although the driver is ultimately responsible for the way in which a vehicle is driven on the road, the Authority as employer can have a significant influence on what the driver does. This policy concerns itself with the issues such as unrealistic schedules, lack of training and poor maintenance of vehicles, all of which can increase the level of occupational road risks.
- 1.3. There are two distinct areas of law that need to be considered in the management of occupational road risks.
  - Road Traffic law (supported by the Highway Code) is mainly concerned with individual driver behaviour and the vehicle owner.
  - Health and safety law focuses primarily (but not exclusively) on the duties of employers to establish safe systems of work for the protection of employees and others. Key duties include having in place health and safety management systems, and undertaking risk assessments.
- 1.4. Employees who drive on behalf of their employer, even though they may be using their personal vehicle, are at work, and so their activities are also subject to the second group of laws. There is now a protocol between the Police Service and the HSE to ensure that HSE will be alerted to investigate any road traffic accident where the role of the employer may be relevant to the cause.
- 1.5. Staff driving badly or infringing the Highway Code while on Authority business reflects on the Authority's reputation. A driving offence committed whilst on Authority business could therefore lead to disciplinary action. Similarly the loss of a driving licence could impact on the ability of an employee to carry out their duties.
- 1.6. Wherever possible employees should make long journeys by train, bus, coach or air as these are safer (mile by mile) than road travel.

## 2. Policy

- 2.1. It is the policy of Exmoor National Park Authority that, where it requires its employees or others to use personal vehicles on the Authority's business, it will do so in a way that will minimise risks to employees and other persons, and not bring the Authority into disrepute.
- 2.2. The Authority will implement this policy by:
  - Instructing that persons who drive on the Authority's behalf do so in compliance with all statutory requirements relating to highway use and this policy.
  - Checking the driving documents (MOT, driving licence and insurance) of all persons as part of the authorisation for use of their vehicles on behalf of the Authority, and requiring Section Heads to check these driving documents on appointment and annually.
  - Assessing whether the uses that the Authority may require of personal vehicles are appropriate for the vehicle(s) that the driver has available.
  - Providing any safety signs that are required to be displayed in respect of special risks, e.g. carrying compressed gas cylinders
  - Providing special vehicle warning lights and high visibility clothing for persons who are required to work on or alongside roads, when identified in a risk assessment.
  - Providing guidance for drivers to help them reduce the risk of accidents

- Using records of mileages travelled at work and other factors involving activities conducted on behalf of the Authority to identify levels of risk and apply the following measures:

**Low risk** (under 5,000 miles travelled annually on the Authority's behalf)

- Check MOT, driving licence and insurance at time of appointment and annually or when first asked to drive on Authority business
- Provide guidance on safe driving practice
- Ensure that pre-employment medical screening process specifically includes consideration of fitness for driving

**High risk** (over 5,000 miles travelled annually on behalf of the Authority).

As for low risk plus:

- Arrange for an annual medical screening review for fitness for driving
- Make a specific risk assessment of driving activity with a view to reducing driving mileage to below the high risk threshold
- Where a reduction below the threshold cannot be achieved, consider the opportunity for a driving assessment and, where appropriate, additional driver training, to raise skills levels.
- Providing all managers with information for them to identify drivers or journeys with a higher risk of road traffic accident.

### **3. Requirements of individuals who are authorised to drive their cars on Authority business**

- 3.1. Individual drivers are required to:
  - complete Appendix 1 when requested and provide the supporting documentation
  - notify their Section Head whenever they change their vehicle and complete new Appendix 1.
- 3.2. Individual drivers are to report, on the Authority Incident Form, any accidents involving their vehicle whilst being driven on the business of the Authority.
- 3.3. Individual drivers must report to their Section Head any change to their medical condition which might affect their ability to drive safely in relation to their work activities and be willing to be examined by a medical practitioner on behalf of the Authority;
- 3.4. When conveying passengers on Authority business, the car should be considered as a "No Smoking" workplace by all occupants.

### **4. Requirements of Managers**

- 4.1. Section Heads and Line Managers have responsibility for managing road related risks.
- 4.2. Section Heads to complete the relevant Section of Appendix 1 recording their annual, on appointment and on change of vehicle inspections of the driving documents of personnel within their Sections and pass to Personnel Officer for retention.
- 4.3. The effectiveness of the Authority's policy will be monitored by
  - Section Heads and Line managers as part of the SRAD process, where health and safety issues are to be raised
  - Consultation with employees and their representatives, which may be informally or through the Health and Safety Committee
  - Health and Safety Committee by scrutiny of reported work-related vehicle incidents
- 4.4. An annual review of the policy will be undertaken by the Head of Business Management

### **5. References and further reading**

- 5.1. The following are drawn to the attention of individuals Section Heads and Line Managers:
  - The Highway Code published by Department of Transport. An electronic copy can be accessed at their web site [www.highwaycode.gov.uk](http://www.highwaycode.gov.uk)
  - RoSPA "Safe Journey Planner"
  - RoSPA "Managing Occupational Road Risk"
  - A Drivers' Guide from Alphabet – [www.alphabet.com](http://www.alphabet.com)

**RECORD OF AUTHORISATION FOR DRIVING**

SECTION 1- TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYEE AND SUPPORTED BY INSURANCE, MOT AND DRIVING LICENCE DOCUMENTATION

Employee Full Name .....

Section .....

Vehicle Details    Car            Van            Motorcycle (circle one)

Make .....Model.....Year.....

Registration Number.....

**Insurance details.**        Business Use covered? – Yes / No\*  
Please attach photocopy of current insurance document.**MOT required?**        Yes/No\*  
                                  If Yes        Expiry date.....**Driving Licence Details.**    Permitted categories/groups.....

Date when any reapplication required.....

Have you had any medical advice that currently affects your ability to drive?  
Yes/No\***Do you accept the need for regular maintenance and to carry out driver safety checks on your vehicle prior to driving?**

Yes / No\*

Signed..... Date.....

## SECTION 2 – TO BE COMPLETED BY SECTION HEAD

Envisaged Annual Mileage .....

Assessed Risk Level - High / Low\*

Mileage Thresholds –                      Over 5000 / below 5000

I confirm that I have inspected the documentation supplied by the employee and have authorised their driving on Authority business

Signed..... Date.....

(\* delete as appropriate)

## GUIDANCE ON USE PRIVATE VEHICLE FOR AUTHORITY BUSINESS

- Be fully aware of the Highway Code and abide by it at all times. The Authority cannot condone any contravention of the Road Traffic Act such as speeding, using a mobile phone when driving, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs or driving when disqualified. The Authority has policies in place in respect of these, and contravention may lead to disciplinary action being taken against individuals.
- Ensure that your insurance company is aware that you use your vehicle for your employer's business ("business use"), and receive re-imbusement for mileage travelled. The Authority cannot cover any uninsured losses or incidental costs due to any accident claim.
- If you carry any passengers for or on behalf of the Authority ensure that you have adequate insurance and that your vehicle is suitable.
- Advise your manager immediately if you are disqualified from driving.
- Advise your manager of any illness, or medication that you are taking, that may affect your ability to drive.
- You are advised to carry out the basic driver safety checks as set out in your vehicle owner's handbook. Pay particular attention to brakes, wheels/tyres, lights, horn and windscreen wipers and washers.
- You are strongly advised to have your vehicle serviced by a competent garage or person, in accordance with schedule in the driver's handbook.
- Do not use your vehicle for purposes for which it is not suited, e.g. carrying large or heavy loads, travelling off road, carrying persons who require special seating which is not available or carrying too many persons.
- Ensure that you follow any instruction or information relating to specific characteristics of any service user passenger you are required to carry.
- Ensure that any load, that could cause harm to occupants in the event of a sudden stop, is appropriately placed and properly secured. Always give due consideration to using sound manual handling principles when loading and unloading.
- Ensure any hazardous loads are carried only in accordance with safety measures identified in risk assessment.
- Ask your manager for any necessary signs if you carry special equipment, e.g. compressed gas cylinders.
- Never drive when tired or when using prescribed drugs that could affect your driving performance. If in doubt consult your GP.
- If you need to wear glasses to read a number plate at 20.5m then you must wear your glasses at all times when driving.
- Never feel under pressure to complete journeys where weather conditions could compromise safety.
- You are advised to take out adequate breakdown cover. The Authority will not assist with any breakdowns or recovery of privately owned vehicles.
- Plan your journey and ensure that you set out in good time and do not have to rush. Send a phone message if you are going to be late for an appointment.
- Take regular rest breaks on longer journeys. The Highway Code recommends a 15-minute break for every two driving hours driving.
- Report any road traffic accident, when at work, on the Authority incident form.

You are recommended to carry a portable emergency reflective warning triangle, a high visibility tabard, an emergency bulb pack, and suitable extra warm clothing particularly in the winter months.

## **GUIDANCE FOR MAINTAINING CONCENTRATION AND ALERTNESS**

### **Falling Asleep at the Wheel**

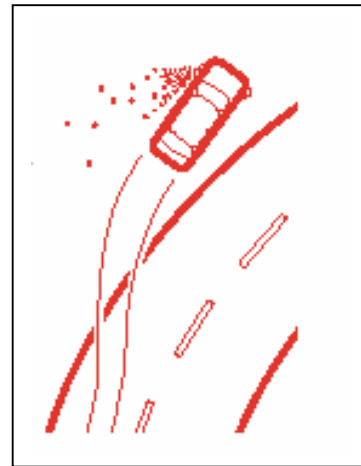
Thousands of crashes are caused by tired drivers every year

They are most likely to happen:

- \_ *on long journeys on monotonous roads, such as motorways*
- \_ *between 2:00 am and 6:00 am*
- \_ *between 2:00 pm and 4 pm (especially after eating, or consuming even one alcoholic drink)*
- \_ *after having less sleep than normal*
- \_ *after drinking alcohol*
- \_ *if taking medicines that cause drowsiness*
- \_ *on journeys home after night shifts*

Sleepiness reduces reaction time, alertness, concentration and decision making, all crucial driving skills.

Tired drivers are much more likely to have an accident, and the crash is likely to be severe because a drowsy or sleeping driver does not usually brake or swerve before the impact.



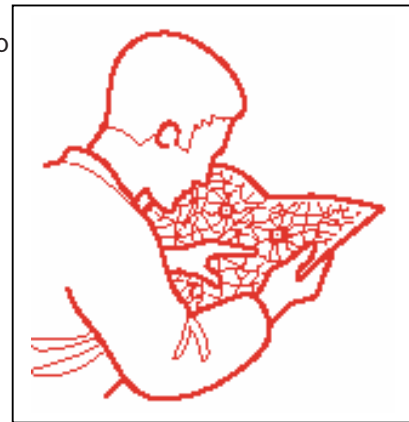
### **Plan Your Journey**

A planned journey reduces the risk of drowsiness and falling asleep at the wheel, and is more efficient, saving you time and money plus reducing the potential for raising your levels of stress.

#### **Time**

Consider how long the journey will take, including time for rest breaks and unexpected delays.

Avoid driving in the early hours of the morning, when you have had less sleep than normal, or in mid afternoon after eating a large meal – these are peak times for sleep-related accidents. Avoid starting a long journey after a full day's (or shift's) work.



### **Plan Your Route**

Write out a route plan that you can easily read.

Check for

- roadworks or likely traffic jams, and if possible, plan an
- alternative route to avoid any major delays.

Plan where to stop for regular rest breaks (every two hours, or sooner if feeling tired, for at least 15 to 20 minutes).

### **Overnight Stop**

Consider arranging to break your journey with an overnight stop where the extended day involving driving long distances puts you at higher risk of a fatigue-induced accident.

### **Second Driver**

If possible, share the driving with a second driver.

### **Sleep**

Try not to stay up late or reduce your normal sleep before a long journey.

### **Alcohol**

Alcohol stays in the body for several hours and will make you more sleepy, so avoid having even one drink.

### **Medicines**

If you are taking any medication, check whether it causes drowsiness. If it does, ask your doctor or pharmacist for a suitable alternative

### **Check Your Vehicle**

Make sure everything's working properly, especially the tyres, lights, windscreen wipers, and all fluid levels.

### **If You Begin to Feel Tired**

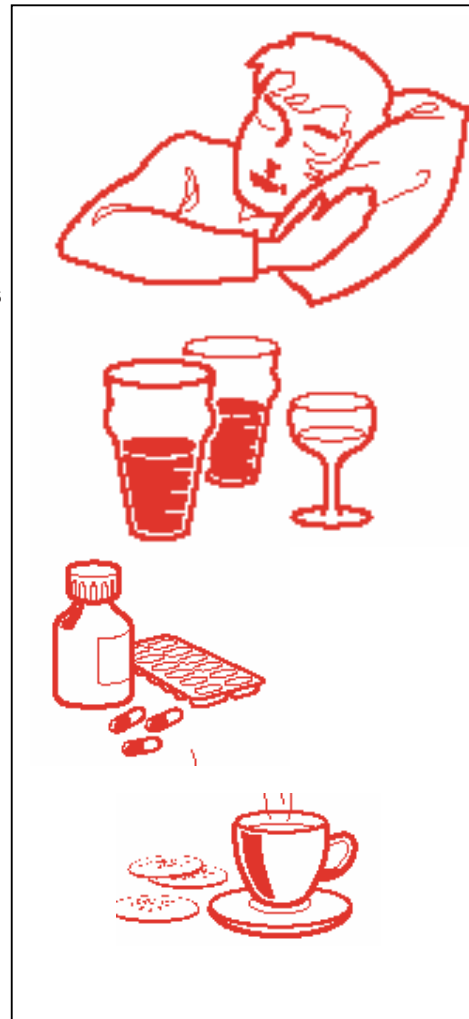
If you start to feel sleepy while driving, this means that you are more likely to crash. Many drivers try to stay awake by turning up the air conditioning, winding down the window, listening to the radio, talking or singing. These will only work for a few minutes, to give you time to find somewhere safe to stop.

### ***They Will Not Stop You Falling Asleep***

#### **If you begin to feel tired:**

- \_ Do not try to complete the journey (you might never arrive)*
- \_ Find somewhere safe to stop (not the hard shoulder)*
- \_ Drink one or two cups of strong coffee or other high caffeine drinks*
- \_ Take a nap of about 15 minutes*

But remember, sleep is the only cure for tiredness. So, if necessary, find somewhere safe to stay overnight.



# Journey Planner

