

Urban Driving Guide

Pocket Guide



Health & Safety Executive



The Scottish
Government

Disclaimer: While the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Scottish Government have made every effort to ensure the information in this document is accurate, they do not guarantee the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of that information; and cannot accept liability for any loss or damages of any kind resulting from reliance on the information or guidance this document contains.

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Introduction

Urban areas are some of the most stressful places that a professional heavy goods driver will face whilst driving. The idea of using unknown routes through built up areas, negotiating any number of traffic lanes, junctions and avoiding traffic related hazards will increase stress levels.

In urban areas the number of vulnerable road users is greatly increased. When driving in an urban area, be mindful of the vulnerability of other road users who are not aware of a truck's manoeuvring requirements and blind spots.

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By following the simple steps outlined in this Pocket Guide you can help safeguard your own safety and that of other road users:

- ➡ Check your vehicle daily
- ➡ Plan your journey ahead
- ➡ Adjust to local advisory routes
- ➡ Drive safely

REMEMBER -

**Good preparation
prevents stress and
reduces lost time**





Should you find yourself becoming stressed in an urban location, understand the symptoms of stress and potential road rage:

- ➡ Anger
- ➡ Shouting
- ➡ Gesturing
- ➡ Spiteful driving
- ➡ Obsessing over one driver only and forgetting all others

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If you find yourself suffering from any of these, stop and take a few minutes to calm down.

REMEMBER -

**Professional Drivers are
Champions of Safety**





1.1 How Will This Pocket Guide Help You?

This guide is for you – the professional driver. It offers simple advice to help:

- ➡ Check your vehicle is fit for purpose
- ➡ Prepare for your journey into an urban area
- ➡ Adjust to local conditions and direction
- ➡ Minimise lost mileage
- ➡ Save you and your employer time and money
- ➡ Communicate with your customers

Reducing the risk of injury and improving safety for drivers and other road users is important for everyone, but having the right advice to hand is sometimes difficult when you are out on the road.

This guide is only a summary of how to plan for a journey through or a delivery to an urban area. Carry this guide in your jacket pocket or cab for quick reference.



1.2 Freight Best Practice

This pocket guide is part of a series of publications produced by the Scottish Government under the Freight Best Practice programme.

The Freight Best Practice programme provides a wide range of **FREE** information to help you improve the efficiency of your business.

For a full list of all the publications and for further information, call the Hotline on:

0845 877 0877

or visit the website at :

www.freightbestpractice.org.uk/scotland

 **FreightBestPractice**
Scotland

Town and City Centres

The following section provides information on what to look out for while driving in the urban area. The following are common situations found on the road and provide information on how to deal with these circumstances.

2.1 Driving Speed

Every road has a speed limit; these limits are a safety message designed to protect the public. When you enter an urban area the speed limit should be clearly signposted. Where speeding leads to an accident that causes a personal injury or even worse a fatality to occur, not only does the law take a **very** strong standpoint on the action of the drivers involved, but **how would you feel as the driver responsible?**



Watch your speed. Speed enforcement cameras are not the only way of reporting speeding vehicles. Today's mobile phone culture means that the public is ready to report your actions.



Driving Speed

➡ **Do not** break the legal speed limit of the road on which you are travelling, or that imposed for your vehicle

➡ Control your vehicle's momentum by good use of your braking systems

➡ Give yourself plenty of space from the vehicle in front

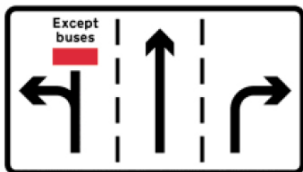
FACT -

Excessive speed wastes fuel and doesn't actually get the job done any quicker



2.2 Lane Changing

You may be required to follow directions given by road markings or signposts.



Be decisive - try not to 'straddle' lanes unnecessarily when approaching a new or unknown junction. This causes confusion amongst other road users and uses up valuable road space.

Lane Changing

When changing lane remember:
Mirror-Signal-Manoeuvre

Try to make your movements clear to other road users by good use of your indicators

When changing lanes keep a constant smooth speed and steady steering input

Check for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, motorcyclists and cyclists before making your manoeuvre

FACT - By planning well ahead and braking smoothly, gear changes will be reduced and fuel will be saved





2.3 Negotiating Junctions

When turning a combination vehicle (articulated or drawbar) at a junction the trailer will disappear from your mirrors as the vehicle bends round the pivot point.

Junctions

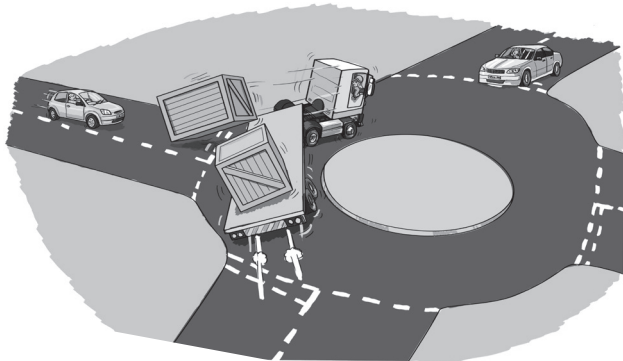
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- ➡ Be prepared to pull up short of traffic signals and stop lines
- ➡ Give space to other large vehicles crossing the junction in front of you
- ➡ Move slowly, clearly showing your turn through use of the indicators
- ➡ Using your blind spot wing mirrors will help you monitor other road users during a turn
- ➡ Use your judgement to track a wide movement without mounting the kerb or endangering other road users and road furniture

FACT -

14% of all HGV accidents in the urban area happen when turning at junctions





2.4 Roundabouts

Your vehicle size may mean that you need to take up more than one lane on a mini-roundabout. Be clear in your intentions on your approach to the give way line.

Roundabouts

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Approach roundabouts at a low speed allowing you to bring the vehicle to a safe stop if necessary

Identify a safe gap in the traffic before moving onto the roundabout

Be careful driving tall vehicles or tankers. High speed, adverse road cambers and sharp turns may cause a rollover

Load security is severely tested on a roundabout

Use your indicators to clearly show which exit you intend to take

Keep your steering input smooth and the vehicle at a constant speed

FACT - 10% of all HGV accidents in the urban area happen at roundabouts





2.5 Traffic and Congestion

Heavy traffic requires the maximum concentration from the professional driver. You need to constantly check braking distances and watch all of your mirrors. By knowing what to look for and adapting to the situation you can reduce your stress level and maintain a high standard of driving.

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Heavy Traffic

- ➡ When moving along with traffic be controlled with your acceleration, braking and gear changes
- ➡ A loaded heavy goods vehicle will not keep up with private cars under acceleration or braking, so don't try
- ➡ Save your service brakes, where possible use your exhaust brake or retarder to help slow your vehicle

TIP! -

Control your use of the throttle and keep the engine revs inside the green band to reduce fuel consumption



2.6 Pinch Points

A 'pinch point' is where a road narrows to a point that two opposing vehicles have to give way to allow each other past.

**Give way to
oncoming
vehicles**

Pinch Points

Approach the location slowly and be prepared to defer to oncoming traffic until it is safe to proceed

Look ahead to judge whether your vehicle can pass safely through narrow gaps

Place your vehicle in a position that allows you to pass through safely

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TIP! -

Know the width of your vehicle, don't guess





2.7 Bridge Weights

Be aware of weight restrictions. Damage done by repeated HGV movements across a weak bridge may result in expensive repairs or even route closure. Advanced signing should exist to warn you to divert away from the area.



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Pinch Points

- ➡ Watch out for advanced warning signs
- ➡ Follow diversionary routes where marked
- ➡ If necessary safely find a place to turn around and continue on your journey

Maximum Gross Weight (mgw)
means that even when empty your
FACT - vehicle cannot cross this bridge, unless the signpost is marked
'except empty vehicles'



2.8 Bridge Heights

If you drive a vehicle with a travelling height of over 3.05 metres (10') you must ensure that the correct overall travelling height of the vehicle is displayed inside the cab.

The minimum height of a UK road bridge without the requirement for a height marker is 5.04 metres (16'6").



Bridge Heights

Know your vehicle's operating height

Plan your route away from low bridges

If you find yourself facing a low bridge, safely find a place to turn around and continue on your journey

Remember to report any bridge strikes

FACT -

Every year around 2,000
HGVs or vans hit railway or
motorway bridges



If you strike a bridge **you** are responsible
for reporting it. Do so **immediately** as
other people's safety could depend upon it!
Most bridges will have a plate attached
stating who to call in that situation



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2.9 Vehicle Access and Manoeuvring

Modern HGV design means that their size is not always compatible with old town and city centres.

Be careful when approaching these areas so you do not damage buildings or present a danger to pedestrians or cyclists.





Safe manoeuvring is an issue for not only the driver, but also any other road users or pedestrians. If it is particularly difficult to access somewhere, a risk assessment of the location may be needed. Sometimes your company may specify reversing beepers, or allow a banksman for deliveries to certain areas.

Vehicle Access

→ If you are concerned about making a turn get out and walk the route first

→ Check if there is a site report or a risk assessment to help you make the delivery in a safe manner

→ Take care not to mount kerbs or hit buildings

→ If there are obstacles that can be moved to make your access easier, ask a member of staff for help

→ Don't be afraid to ask customers for help; they should know the best way to get into their own premises

FACT -

15% of all HGV accidents in built up areas occur when stopping, parking and reversing!





Drivers: You are the key!

INTRODUCING THE WORLD'S MOST **ADVANCED NAVIGATION SYSTEM**



Don't over-rely on Sat Navs!



They can direct you on to
routes that might be



inappropriate for lorries.

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www.freightbestpractice.org.uk

 **Transport
OperatorsPack**

Related to the TVE as a means of delivery of local TVE, covered 80%

Department for
Transport

Route Choice and Navigation

Before starting on a route through an urban area take some time to plan your route. Follow the advice in this section which describes how to identify your destination, and which is the simplest route for you to navigate your size and weight of vehicle to that point.

This section gives you a brief description of how to make best use of the tools:

- Satellite Navigation (SatNav)
- Truckers' Maps
- Local Street Guides
- Route Signs





3.1 Route Planning

Planning your journey helps to choose the safest and most efficient route. Check the route on a map or SatNav to see if it is suitable for the length, width, height and weight of your vehicle.

When planning a route through an urban area, where possible:

- ➡ Stick to major routes
- ➡ Take the most direct route possible
- ➡ Try not to travel at peak rush hours
- ➡ Avoid streets with low bridges and weight restrictions
- ➡ Stay away from heavily congested junctions
- ➡ Avoid pedestrian precincts and schools

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FACT -

Getting lost wastes time,
fuel and money



3.2 Satellite Navigation (SatNav)

If you use Satellite Navigation you should double check the route with a suitable map or atlas to ensure that your route is appropriate for your vehicle type.

There are Satellite Navigation products designed for the professional truck driver. These can be programmed with your vehicle's height and weight. The software will then choose a suitable route avoiding obstacles on your route.



REMEMBER -

Double check your SatNav route against a Truckers' Atlas or other approved information source

3.3 Truckers' Maps

A number of good quality publications exist for the professional truck driver. Low bridges are clearly marked on such maps with heights in both feet and inches and in metres.

Large scale maps are also included with details of all low bridges and height restrictions of major cities, ports and restricted junctions.

3.4 Freight Area Maps

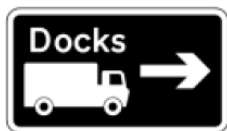
If a Freight Quality Partnership (FQP) exists it may have produced freight area maps that show preferred freight routes. These will aid your planning as they detail relevant retail or industrial areas and suitable routes.

3.5 Local Street Mapping

For more rural towns and villages, local street maps and guides are commonly available from petrol stations, post offices and local paper shops. If you are new to an area it may well be worth your time (and expense) picking up this type of map.

3.6 Freight Route Signage

Freight Routes exist to aid the professional driver through urban areas. They are marked by clear White on Black signage. These are found in areas such as ports, shopping centres and industrial estates.



3.7 Finding a Safe Place to Park

Before setting off you should know where safe parking is located near your destination, in case you need to wait in a town or city before delivering. Be aware of this sign for approved lorry parks.




3.8 Using Road Signs to Navigate

You will come across help such as route signs which will guide you along designated routes into and out of a particular town centre.

- ➡ White on Blue road signs are used for indicating directions when on a motorway
- ➡ White on Green signs are used to indicate Primary or A-class roads
- ➡ Black on White road signs are used for general direction signs commonly for local routes within urban areas

REMEMBER -



Try to keep to the highest grade of road on the network, as this will help ensure that you remain on a route most appropriate for a large vehicle

3.9 Internet and RSS Services

A number of internet based traffic and weather services are available to aid your planning prior to departure. Some examples are:

- ➡ Traffic Scotland:
<http://www.trafficscotland.org/traffic.aspx>
- ➡ Traffic England:
<http://www.trafficengland.com/>
- ➡ Met Office:
<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/>



3.10 Radio Advice for the Route Ahead

Your best defence against getting lost or stuck in traffic is forward planning. Local radio is one of the best and most up to date tools for negotiating urban areas.

You can tune your in-cab radio by using the Traffic Programme (TP) or Traffic Announcement (TA) button and choosing the 'Local Update' setting. This function will tune into local as well as national traffic reports.

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3.11 Variable Message Signs (VMS)

Variable Message Signs (VMS) are used on Motorways and some other main roads to transfer short sharp messages to road users and provide accurate and up to date information on local traffic delays.

REMEMBER -

It only takes a couple of seconds to take on board information which may help you save hours on the road



Point of Delivery

The point of delivery can create many challenges. This section provides details of what information you the driver need before the point of delivery. It shows you how to interpret loading and parking restrictions and what you should consider before arrival. It also provides safety advice when parking at the kerbside.

4.1 Delivery and Load Documentation

Read carefully any special instructions on your driver and delivery notes. Make sure you get all delivery notes signed by the customer.

- ➡ You should plan the route and load the vehicle in the most efficient way to make your deliveries
- ➡ Think about which side of the vehicle is easiest to access the goods
- ➡ If you need to use a tail-lift or crane make sure you can operate the systems safely

Delivery and load documentation

Use your load plan to schedule your deliveries efficiently

Follow any special delivery instructions detailed on your documentation (where available):

- Delivery Notes
- Driver's Notes
- Load Plan
- Site/Location Report

Load your vehicle last drop first, first drop last so you have easy access to the goods (if offloading from the rear of the vehicle)

If you do not load your own vehicle, check in which order your deliveries have been loaded

FACT -

Delay and lost mileage costs time, fuel and money!



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4.2 Delivery, Load Plan, and Location Feedback

You should always give feedback to your transport office, your planners and fellow drivers. Report problems and issues that you have faced and resolved.



Feedback

Make a note of any delivery problems and report back to your traffic office

If you visit a new location complete a site/location report (if available) to aid other drivers delivering to the same location in the future to avoid stress

Give feedback to your planners about issues with the suggested drop order – if you don't tell them, they will assume that the plan was acceptable

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TIP! -

Don't let your fellow drivers suffer in the future, make sure you give feedback



4.3 Pedestrian Areas

Pedestrians have the right of way and it is common practice to travel slowly using hazard warning lights and headlights to make your vehicle as visible as possible. Signage will show you if there are times of the day that you must not enter a pedestrian area.



Pedestrian Areas

- Keep your speed down and turn on your lights
- Take your time passing through
- Safely park so that your vehicle does not obstruct shop doors or pavements
- Do not park on or near corners as this can result in overtaking by other vehicles that may have only limited sight of pedestrians

FACT! - Modern vehicle engines are very quiet; a pedestrian might not hear you approach!



4.4 Delivering in Built-Up Areas

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Delivering in Built Up Areas

- Try to find a safe and level space for your vehicle to stop
- Don't leave your vehicle idling unnecessarily
- Where necessary use cones or barriers to help guide pallets or trolleys across pedestrian areas
- Ask your customer to help you set up a safe place to offload your delivery

FACT! - In 2008 there were 110 reported personal injury accidents on urban roads involving a parked vehicle and an HGV





In the city centre parking may be at a premium. You must use your best judgement to find a safe place to stop and offload your vehicle. Tail lift operation can present a danger to pedestrians. Always put safety first.

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4.5 Delivery Restrictions

Look out for local delivery restrictions shown on signs and lamp posts. These will provide you with information on when and if you can deliver in this location.



Delivery restrictions may also be for whole areas of a town or city, such as a low-emission zone or a congestion charge area. Make sure you know what to expect on your journey.

Loading Bays may be marked on the road surface, look for one which fits your size and type of vehicle.



Delivery Restrictions

- ➡ Be aware of bus lane operating times
- ➡ Look for preferred delivery times and local restrictions
- ➡ Look out for steep road camber when operating close to the kerb

FACT! -

Road markings are still enforceable if your vehicle overhangs the end of the bay



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4.6 Onboard Systems, Tippers and Forklifts

Where your vehicle is fitted with hydraulic lifting gear, tipper, delivery hoses, skip hoist or a loading crane, it is good practice to cordon off your working area. This should be done with cones, bunting tape or physical barriers to ensure the public do not walk into your worksite.



Onboard Systems, Cranes and Forklifts

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- ➔ Look out for overhead cables and height restrictions if operating hook loaders, loading cranes or tippers
- ➔ Use footplates under crane legs or landing gear to avoid damage to pavements, car parks or road surfaces
- ➔ Use safety equipment, cones, tape, barriers, or signs to keep the public out of your working area
- ➔ If working across a pavement ensure that you have good visibility
- ➔ Remember that hoses are a trip hazard, and should be signed as such
- ➔ When moving roll-cages keep looking around you to spot potential hazards

WARNING! - Touching overhead cables with machinery or plant can put your life at risk



Is Your Vehicle Fit for Purpose?

Urban areas are particularly taxing on a driver's concentration. It is equally as hard on the vehicle's controls and systems; multiple gear changes, repeated braking and accelerating, as well as turning sharply all place additional stress on the components of your vehicle.

Within this section you will find information on how to check over your vehicle. Also advice is provided on what to look out for and why these checks are so important for your own safety and the safety of other road users.

Defects or problems should always be recorded, reported and if necessary repaired. The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) has the right to stop the vehicle at the roadside, carry out spot checks and issue prohibition notices if necessary.



5.1 Safety Checks

Vehicle checks should be carried out before starting any journey. These should be part of your every day responsibilities as a professional driver.

Your vehicle walk-round should be done before each journey. You, the driver, are legally responsible for:

- ➡ Checking the vehicle is roadworthy
- ➡ Ensuring that all equipment is present and serviceable
- ➡ **NOT DRIVING** the vehicle if major faults are present

5.2 Brakes

When you start your shift, test your brakes before pulling onto the public highway. Check your brakes before every journey:

- ➡ Charge up your air tanks and turn off the engine
- ➡ Listen for leaks in hoses and brake components
- ➡ Monitor your air tank readouts on the dashboard
- ➡ Before leaving your rest area or yard, test your brakes

FACT! - Sympathetic use of service brakes ensures they last longer, give better performance and save you money





5.3 Tyres

Urban driving places extra strain on tyres through increased scrub in tight turns, the risk of 'kerbing' and damage to side walls through potholes and manhole covers.

- ➡ Inspect dual tyres for even wear
- ➡ Look for damage and cracks
- ➡ Remove debris trapped between twin tyres
- ➡ Replace worn or damaged tyres immediately
- ➡ Flat spots can indicate a locking brake

FACT! -

Regular tyre pressure checks ensure that your vehicle is operating at peak performance saving you fuel and money!



5.4 Wheel Alignment

Urban driving and kerbside delivery increases the risk of knocking wheels out of alignment through scrubbing against kerbstones and slow speed manoeuvring. The condition of your tyres is your earliest sign of problems with wheel alignment.

- ➡ Tyres which have scrubbed on the shoulder may be an indication of a wheel which is out of alignment
- ➡ The added 'drag' on the tarmac will typically wear the suspension and steering components

FACT! -

A wheel out of alignment by 1° on only one axle could increase fuel consumption by around 5%



5.5 Windscreen and Windows

When driving in an urban environment any number of dangers may present themselves to you, the driver. To ensure that your windscreen stays clear:

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- ➡ Regularly clean the glass on all cab windows
- ➡ Do not cover air vents with paperwork and clothing
- ➡ Save fuel by using your night heater instead of engine idling to demist your cab before starting a shift

FACT! -

A heavy truck engine at idle uses half a gallon of fuel per hour!





5.6 Mirrors

Before starting your journey make sure your wing mirrors are correctly positioned so that you can see all around the vehicle. To ensure the best all round view of the vehicle and performance from your wing mirrors:

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- ➡ Wipe clean your mirrors before every journey
- ➡ Use heater elements if fitted to clear mirrors while driving

FACT! -

In 2008 in Great Britain there were 72 accidents involving pedestrian, cyclist or motorcyclist casualties in which a HGV had the contributory factor 'vehicle blind spot' reported



5.7 Lights, Markers and Reflectors

Make sure your vehicle is visible when operating at night. In towns and city centres this is important so that other road users can see your vehicle.

FACT! -

22% of accidents involving
HGVs are as a result of a driver
failing to look properly!



5.8 Load Safety

If your vehicle has a sheeted load, take the opportunity to stop during the journey and check your vehicle. Make sure there are no loose lashings which may break loose and endanger other road users and pedestrians.

Where the weather may be bad or your load is over normal width or length use extra straps and chains to keep your load safe.



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Damage to curtains and sheets **MUST** be repaired immediately, not only to protect the precious cargo but it may be hazardous to other road users.

FACT! -

Loose lashing and sheets are
considered an insecure load and
could result in a fine or prosecution!



Appendix

Freight Best Practice

Tel: 0845 877 0 877

www.freightbestpractice.org.uk/scotland

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Tel: 08701 545 500

www.hse.gov.uk

- ➡ Driving at work – managing work-related road safety (HSE)
- ➡ Health and safety in road haulage (HSE)
- ➡ Workplace Transport Safety (HSE)
- ➡ WorkSmart videos for workplace transport (HSE)

Department for Transport (DfT)

Tel: 020 7944 8300

www.dft.gov.uk

- ➡ Safety of Loads on Vehicles – Code of Practice (DfT)
- ➡ Work related road safety (DfT)

Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA)

Tel: 0870 606 0440

www.vosa.gov.uk

- ➡ Drivers' hours and tachograph rules for goods vehicles in the UK (VOSA)
- ➡ Your guide to ABS and EBS (VOSA)
- ➡ Guide to maintaining roadworthiness (VOSA)
- ➡ Check it out - DVD (VOSA)

Driving Standards Agency (DSA)

Tel: 0115 936 6666

www.dsa.gov.uk

- ➡ The official guide to hazard perception - DVD (DSA)
- ➡ The Official Highway Code (DSA)
- ➡ The Official DSA guide to Driving Goods Vehicles (DSA)

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

Tel: 0121 248 2000

www.rospa.com

- ➡ Driving for Work: Mobile Phones (RoSPA)
- ➡ Driving for Work: Safer Speed Policy (RoSPA)

Freight Best Practice publications, including those listed below, can be obtained FREE of charge by calling the **Hotline** on **0845 877 0 877** or by downloading them from the website **www.freightbestpractice.org.uk**

Saving **FUEL**

Fuel Saving Tips

This handy pocket guide is ideal for drivers and managers looking for simple ways to reduce fuel consumption.

Performance **MANAGEMENT**

Fleet Performance Management Tool Incorporating CO₂ Calculator

This tool has been designed to help fleet operators improve their operational efficiency using key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure and manage performance. KPIs include costs, operational, service, compliance, maintenance and environmental.

Case **STUDIES**

Companies and Drivers Benefit from SAFED for HGVs: A Selection of Case Studies

This selection of case studies describes the benefits experienced by 15 companies and their drivers who have taken part in the Safe and Fuel Efficient Driving (SAFED) scheme.

Transport Operators' Pack **-TOP**

TOP provides practical 'every day' support material to help operators implement best practice in the workplace and acts in direct support of tasks essential to running a successful fuel management programme.

Equipment & **SYSTEMS**

Telematics for Efficient Road Freight Operations

This guide provides information on the basic ingredients of telematics systems, highlights how to use this technology, the information obtained from it and how to select the right system for your needs.

Developing **SKILLS**

Drive It! DVD

A 25 minute driver focussed DVD helping to inform and educate on methods of improving efficiency. It contains several examples and case studies of how companies improved their own operational efficiency.



➔ **FreightBestPractice**
Scotland

February 2010.

Printed in the UK on paper containing at least 75% recycled fibre.

FBP1114 © Queens Printer and Controller of HMSO 2010.

Developing **SKILLS**