

## 1. Aim of toolbox talk

The aim of this toolbox talk is to ensure that you (including sub-contracted and agency drivers) know the most efficient, safe and appropriate vehicles and routes to use and that any vehicle routes to sites or premises are adhered to unless directed otherwise.

This means understanding which vehicle to use and why, which roads will be used to and from premises or sites in order to ensure that customer requirements are met and that vulnerable road user safety is optimised.

## 2. How this toolbox will help you

This toolbox talk will help you to understand why the company plans routes and its contribution to business efficiency and good customer service. This talk will also help you to understand:

- The rationale for the types of roads and routes you select when planning your journey, eg whether it is the shortest distance or means staying on main roads
- Speed limits are upheld
- That the shortest route is not necessarily the quickest route
- The time needed to complete the journey and that it can be realistically completed in that time
- How to identify hazards along a particular route and how to deal with them
- The consequences of route deviation

The talk will end with some questions, so listen up!

## 3. Reason why

Routing and scheduling should be done so that operations run as smoothly and efficiently as possible. This can mean:

- Drivers don't get lost
- Inappropriate routes are avoided
- Routes are efficiently aligned to deliveries and collections
- The probability of collisions is lowered
- Fuel savings are achieved
- Environmental impacts are reduced

The company goal is to route and schedule journeys effectively so that:

- Maximum efficiencies are achieved
- Your jobs are less stressful
- Costs can be controlled which makes the business more profitable and your jobs easier
- Customer satisfaction is maintained, which means more business, fewer complaints and increased job security
- The risk of coming into contact with vulnerable road users is reduced
- The right vehicle is used for the right job

It's also of paramount importance that you understand:

- The correct procedure to follow if you need to deviate from a route
- The consequences of deviating from a route unnecessarily

## 4. Who needs to plan the journey?

The transport office (if the company has one) will be responsible for planning routes. Otherwise another role within the company will have the responsibility or this could lie with you, the drivers. If you operate regularly in an area, your local knowledge is invaluable and should be factored in. If planned by a manager or supervisor, time should be made available to brief you on the plan before the journey is started.

## 5. How should routing and scheduling be done?

The journey should be planned before it is started. If you haven't planned the journey yourself make sure you're briefed on the route and take into account:

- Road restrictions, e.g. time, constraints on vehicle size, 'banned' routes etc
- Preferred route options and alternatives in the event of an unforeseen event
- An evaluation of existing routes to check they are still the most efficient
- Journey length in order to reduce the risk of fatigue
- The need for rest breaks and access to toilets, washing facilities and refreshments
- Fees and tolls
- Safer routes which are more appropriate for the type of vehicle doing the journey
- Avoiding periods of peak traffic flow (where possible)
- Any delivery time windows
- Routes which you should avoid
- Arranging the drops so that deliveries and collections are in the right order and efficient

Your operation may not involve deliveries but may be a service function, e.g. related to gas or electrics. In many cases it is just as useful to schedule the day allowing time for the 'on-site' work to be completed particularly if multi-site work is involved.

# FORS Toolbox Talk – 01 Routing and scheduling

## 6. Incentive

Effective journey planning and using the right vehicle for the right job will help to ensure you:

- Use vehicles as efficiently and effectively as possible so that vehicle running costs are kept to a minimum
- Are less stressed as you'll know where you need to be, how to get there and when you need to arrive
- Are travelling on the optimum route and special routing and access requirements issued by clients are adhered to
- Know about the locations of en-route parking and fuelling facilities
- Minimise the potential for interaction with vulnerable road users
- Avoid parking charges and unnecessary tolls

## 7. Questions to ask to ensure that the talk has been understood

1. Who needs to do the routing and scheduling?
2. When should routing and scheduling take place?
3. Why should you plan journeys?
4. What does effective routing and scheduling achieve?
5. What procedure should you follow if you need to deviate from a route?
6. What are the consequences of deviating from a route unnecessarily?
7. Does the route provided take account of overhead restrictions eg bridges, tunnels and other hazards which may present danger for your vehicle?
8. Does your planned route take account of road types and conditions ensuring you allow for rest breaks?
9. Does your route take into account bad weather conditions and is your vehicle equipped to operate in such weather conditions?

## 8. Final summary

To sum up, we need to make sure journeys are planned so that operations run as smoothly and efficiently as possible. This is done to ensure that you (including sub-contracted and agency drivers) know the most efficient, safe and appropriate vehicles and routes to use and that any vehicle routes to sites or premises are adhered to unless directed otherwise.

It is important to understand that effective planning can help to reduce stress and control costs - making the business more profitable and your job easier. You should also appreciate that good journey planning will help ensure customer satisfaction - which means more business and fewer complaints.

Thank you for your time – and now I would like your feedback.