



The Chartered  
Institute of Logistics  
and Transport

# RISC

## REDUCING ROAD RISK IN SUPPLY CHAINS



**Around one third of all serious and fatal road collisions involve someone driving for work.**

**And yet work-related road safety is not recognised in public sector contracts in the same way as workplace safety.**

Raising road safety standards throughout public procurement is of fundamental importance. Specifically, opportunities exist to reduce road risk within individual organisational supply chains, affecting operators, suppliers, customers and drivers.

All public bodies possess the buying power and the authority to demand a reduction in road risk throughout their supply chains, achievable by ensuring suppliers sign-up to contractual obligations.



# REDUCING ROAD RISK IN SUPPLY CHAINS

## Lessons need to be learned

Two high-profile incidents in 2014 involved commercial vehicles and their drivers, both either employed by, or subcontracted to, Local Authorities. In December 2014, a Glasgow council-owned refuse lorry crashed killing six people and injuring 15 others. Just seven weeks later, four people were killed in Bath by a tipper truck delivering aggregate to a council Park-and-Ride development.

In less than two months, dozens of lives were shattered and two people jailed for manslaughter. In both cases, reasonable precautions could have prevented the incidents. Clearly, there are lessons that must be learned.

In recent years, we have seen a significant increase in numbers of vulnerable road users, ie pedestrians and cyclists, using UK streets. This increase is set against a comparable growth in construction and development in our towns and cities. Alongside routine delivery and servicing vehicles, such a growth in infrastructure generates significant volumes of freight traffic and, therefore, a resultant increase in road risk.

The public sector is in an excellent position to help manage this risk, thus blazing a trail for others to follow.

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It is easy to turn blind eye to the contractor, and even easier to either knowingly or unknowingly overlook the actions of the sub-contractor. However, a 'not my problem' attitude not only has the potential to shatter lives, but it increases an operator's reputational risk. It is vital that local authorities and public bodies take ownership of the risks that their supply chains generate and take action to minimise them.

## Increasing road usage – increasing the risk of collision

With the government's aim to make 'active travel' part of everyday life by 2040, £64m of funding was made available at the start of 2017 to help promote a range of active travel projects across the UK. This forms part of a broader package of over £300m to further encourage walking and cycling. In line with the government's investment, local authorities are also working to improve significantly active travel infrastructure and networks.

Assuming such initiatives are successful in encouraging the public to take to the streets on foot and by bicycle, it is also inevitable that there will be an increased risk of conflict between vehicles and other road users. It is therefore fundamental that local authorities and other public sector organisations, irrespective of funding schemes, use their influential buying power to reduce road risk and to help protect the safety of vulnerable road users.

Reducing road risk in supply chains is generally well received if implemented consistently. Responsible logistics operators welcome the application of benchmarked, industry-wide safety standards that help flush out those who might sometimes cut corners in a price-driven market.

The Glasgow and Bath incidents could have both been preventable. These two incidents alone should provide the impetus for local authorities and public sector bodies to learn lessons and to take action. Specifying road risk requirements as a fundamental requirement of a contract (or sub-contract) could avoid a recurrence of similar tragedies.

### **Case for change**

Under health and safety law, the Glasgow case was not deemed to be 'work related'. HSE Scotland made the decision not to investigate the incident and as such it was investigated as a 'road traffic collision' by the police. Findings of the Glasgow police investigation showed the driver had lied about his medical history in order to gain and retain employment and associated licences.

In the Bath case, also investigated as a 'road traffic collision', the investigation found that the haulage company had flouted regulations and was described as having a 'complete disregard for vehicle safety and maintenance' and a 'very casual attitude towards safety'. Evidently, road safety is the 'poor relation' to health and safety – although the likelihood of death and serious injury on the roads is significantly greater than in the workplace. So why are road risk requirements not common place in contracts?

The progress that has been made over the years to reduce and manage workplace risk now needs to be replicated to reduce and manage work-related road risk. In the interest of public safety, there is a clear need for this to become a new 'cultural norm' and, to reiterate, the public sector is best placed to lead this change contractually within its supply chains.

### **LOOK TO LONDON**

Great strides have been made in the Capital. The construction sector in particular has been extremely successful in improving and embedding safety cultures on-site and remains well placed to take this proven safety culture onto the roads.

With construction vehicles being disproportionately represented in both pedestrian and cyclist fatalities in London, the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) initiative has been developed. Through CLOCS, the construction and logistics sectors have demonstrated commitment to change and continue to lead a revolution in reducing road risk in supply chains.

CLOCS is now a common national standard and is regarded as 'the' road risk standard for the construction sector. It also paves the way as the contractual standard for other industry sectors to follow.

As such, the Construction industry standard: Managing work-related road risk is now widely implemented by construction clients. This includes a series of contractual requirements that provides fleet operators with the consistency it needs to collectively reduce road risk.



# REDUCING ROAD RISK IN SUPPLY CHAINS

## Responsible procurement – the only way

It is evident that change is needed to help improve the safety of all road users, but particularly pedestrians and cyclists. Reducing the risks posed to, and by, vulnerable road users through contractual agreement is a simple step that any organisation with purchasing power can make. Responsible procurement means adopting many ethical measures but should include a commitment to manage any activity that has the potential to cause harm. It also demands a mindset change by individuals throughout the supply chain.

The good news is that the way has already been paved by the construction industry which has provided a clear framework which others can follow. To maximise success, the campaign to reduce road risk in supply chains requires collaboration, consistency and collective buying power.

RiSC - Reducing road risk in supply chains, aims to normalise the employment of safe fleet operations through the common application of contractual road risk requirements. These include:

- **Safer management**

Meeting the standard of an approved independent fleet management audit

- **Safer drivers**

Confirming drivers are medically fit, are trained on road risk and their driving licences checked through DVLA

- **Safer vehicles**

Ensuring vehicles are roadworthy and fitted with safety equipment to help protect drivers and vulnerable road users

By implementing simple, cost effective control measures to existing responsible procurement practices demonstrates that reducing road risk is an operational prerequisite, is being managed and monitored, and, ultimately, will save lives.

**Find out more by emailing Glen Davies:**

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