

Too many vehicles not roadworthy - Recent Survey Findings

Many companies are still not facing up to one of the biggest risks to the lives of their employees—occupational road risk. 200-250 people die in the workplace each year, but further 800-1100 employees are killed on the road each year. A recent survey of nearly 6000 vehicles (both company and privately owned) by Total Motion Vehicle Management shows that there is still cause for concern in the road worthiness of too many vehicles that are routinely on our roads. This survey found that two out of three privately owned vehicles driven on company business were not safe to be on the road. The survey also revealed that almost 60 per cent of the private vehicles were not properly maintained and around a third of their drivers were not correctly insured.

Insurance, Road Tax and Driving Licence Of the 5734 vehicles surveyed:

- 31% of drivers using private vehicles for company business were not correctly insured
- 19% of drivers using company vehicles for company business were not correctly insured
- 4% were without an up to date tax disc
- 12% of the drivers did not have a valid driving licence

Vehicles found to be unroadworthy and not maintained properly

In the latest survey, a staggering 68% of the private cars used on company business were found to be unroadworthy, while only 0.2% of company cars were found to be unroadworthy in the same period. Unroadworthy is based on a number of criteria including defective brakes, illegal tyres, low oil levels etc.

Closely allied to these figures are the figures for vehicles that are not maintained properly (vehicle maintenance was assessed according to manufacturers' service and maintenance schedules using service log books and physical checks). In the latest survey, 59% of private vehicles used on company business were not being maintained properly, compared to only 14% of company vehicles. Further to this, 19% of all vehicles also had unreported damage.

Completion of daily/weekly checks on vehicles

During the survey, drivers were asked a number of questions relating to their knowledge and understanding of driving-related health & safety issues and to their own company's fleet policy. 91% of all drivers admitting to not completing daily/weekly checks on their vehicle. This lack of basic vehicle checking helps to explain why 71% of the unroadworthiness and maintenance issues of private vehicles were tyre related.

Company vehicle and fleet policies

The survey indicates that many companies are putting policies in place. The survey also indicates that many companies are failing to manage and enforce these policies. 98% of drivers said their companies did not monitor whether they were conducting safety checks. Companies need to make drivers more aware of their responsibilities and need to enforce their driving health & safety policies actively.

Companies offering cash for car schemes - a problem?

It is increasingly common for companies to offer cash-for-car schemes as these are perceived as a cheaper alternative to company cars. It is likely that this perception is brought about because the companies fail to incorporate the necessary processes and procedures to ensure that these cars are roadworthy and to comply with duty of care legislation. Companies should consider the effects of their vehicle policies on the health and safety of their employees. Companies should consider the effect of the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 as this new Act will make it easier to bring prosecutions against companies that fall short of the mark in protecting the lives of employees and of non-employees.

Contact us -

For assistance with

**Occupational Road Risk Policies
and driver/vehicle documentation**

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