Road Safety Plan Template

This section identifies the key elements of a road safety plan and provides one example of how it can be structured. How you build and present your plan will depend on your organization - the nature of its business, its administrative processes, the preferences of management and the safety committee, standards within your industry, and what makes operational sense.

Topics below cover the key components but you may want to include others depending on the specific needs of your organization. When developing your plan, use concise words that clearly explain what is to be done, and who is responsible for it. Your goal should be to create policies and safe work procedures that employees and supervisors understand and can apply. There are many links to resources on our website that will assist you and provide examples.

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Check the Regulations

One of the first steps is to review the relevant regulations to understand the legal obligations of company owners, managers, supervisors and employees. For an overview, visit The Laws.

Visit the Workers Compensation Act and the WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation. While several sections of that regulation have implications for road safety and vehicles, pay particular attention to Part 2.2, Part 3, Part 4, Part 16 as well as Part 7 and Part 8. As you review them, keep in mind that each motor vehicle your employees operate in the course of their work is a workplace.

If your organization operates commercial vehicles, there will be information important to your organization in the following Acts, Regulations and Standards.

Motor Vehicle Act and its associated Regulations
Passenger Transportation Act and its associated Regulations
Commercial Transport Act and its associated Regulations
Transport of Dangerous Goods Act and its associated Regulations
Cargo Securement Standard, Part 10

Employers with commercial vehicles licensed with a gross vehicle weight of more than 5,000 kg, with a seating capacity of 10+ passengers plus the driver, or operating under the Passenger Transportation Act need to be familiar with National Safety Code requirements. See the National Safety Code Safety Plan Guidelines. Find further information at the Commercial Vehicles Safety and Enforcement website.

Each of these documents has numerous pages. Make your review efficient by scanning the table of contents looking for parts that apply to your business. Focus on them. Sometimes, you can use Act or Regulation wording directly to explain requirements to employees. Usually, it is necessary to read and “translate” that language so that explanations in the road safety plan are clear and useful to employees. If you find some of the wording challenging, several of those Acts or Regulations have a “definitions” section at their start. You can also find most of them in our Road Safety Glossary.

Overview

Include information about the organization (the nature of its business / work, locations, organizational structure, number of employees, etc.) and the reasons it is creating a road safety program. Identify employees to whom the plan applies (e.g. all employees that drive, volunteers, contractors) and to whom the plan does not apply, if there are any exempted or conditional roles, or limitations (such as how employees are to apply procedures when work is being conducted under a prime contractor).

Acknowledge the people involved in drafting the plan, and who will be involved in its review. Use position titles (such as “Shift Supervisors” or “Safety Lead”) rather than individuals’ names. Since your road safety plan will be periodically updated and revised, this is a good place to explain the methods used to control versions. Use the footer to identify the version and/or print date.

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Responsibilities

Provide statements about the organization’s commitment to ensuring the health and safety of all employees. Identify specific road safety responsibilities that individuals within the company have. Various Acts and Regulations, particularly the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, describe several key responsibilities and rights of individuals within an organization.

- Owners / directors
- Supervisors / line managers
- Employees
- Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee members

The Responsibilities section should answer broad questions including:

- Who “owns” or is ultimately responsible for the road safety plan?
- Who will communicate the plan to staff?
- Who is responsible for ensuring the hazard assessment is completed?
- Who will draft policies and procedures?
- Who will conduct inspections?
- Who will control documents, compile results and prepare reports or summaries for review?
- Who will review the plan, and how often will they do that?

Hazard Inventory and Risk Assessment

Look across your organization and consider all of the circumstances and conditions in which employees operate a motor vehicle. Identify all of the hazards they encounter plus the hazards you can reasonably anticipate they will encounter. Then, consider the frequency with which employees are exposed to each hazard, the probability an incident will occur, and the most likely, rather than the most severe, consequence – Explain that in terms of the extent or magnitude of personal injury or property damage, or both.

Ask employees who are familiar with those hazards, or who are likely to encounter them to help identify hazards and assess risks. Use an objective process to rank the likelihood of each hazard causing or contributing to a motor vehicle incident, and use the resulting scores to decide which hazards are the greatest priority for attention and action. Don’t neglect acting on “small” hazards; sometimes it takes years to reduce risks associated with tough hazards, but you can take quick, easy steps to effectively manage issues that are readily within your control. Find out more at Road Safety Risk Assessment.
Journey Management

Describe the steps employees and supervisors will take to manage journeys. As you develop this policy and its safe work procedures, think about the following questions:

- What process will employees and supervisors use to determine if travel or driving is necessary at all? What practical alternatives exist (e.g. online meetings, teleconferences, public transportation, air travel, walking, etc.)?
- Must supervisors or managers approve any or all driving? Under what circumstances is driving not acceptable?
- If driving is selected as the transportation method, what are the steps employees will take to confirm they are fit to drive, check that vehicles are ready to go, and select a time and route that minimizes exposure to hazards?
- What check-in system will employees use to confirm their safe arrival? What emergency procedures will staff activate if an employee misses their check-in?

Organizations quite commonly develop a standard form and procedure that employees use to plan and implement their journeys, and a method to document and communicate their travel plan to a manager or check-in contact. Find out more at TripCheck.

Confirming Driver Qualifications

Describe the processes the organization will use to confirm that each employee is qualified to operate a vehicle in the course of their work. Consider the following questions:

- What process will be used to evaluate each driver’s skills and driving performance - in-house or third party assessment (e.g. driving instructor)?
- How frequently will managers confirm an employee has a valid driver’s licence appropriate to the vehicles they will operate? At time of hire? Annually? More often?
- How often will employees be required to provide a current driver’s abstract? Who will review abstracts? What happens if a driver has accumulated “too many” penalty points?
- Are employees required to advise the employer if their licence is suspended or if they have a medical condition that could affect their ability to operate a motor vehicle?

In developing your policy and procedures, consider all of the vehicles employees will be asked to operate and the conditions and circumstances in which they will operate them. Find ideas and guidance here.
Driver Education and Training

Most employers recognize that possession of a driver’s licence is insufficient evidence that an employee is qualified to operate a vehicle. Employers need to provide orientation specific to the workplace. Even after a driver has taken a specialized preparatory course, an employer may need to supplement existing skills with role-specific training. Driver assessments identify driving competencies. They also often identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. In devising practices around core education and supplemental training, consider the following questions.

- What skills and behaviours do employees need to complete driving assignments safely? Are there general skill requirements common to “all” drivers? Do some vehicles, routes or circumstances require specialized skills?
- What education, training and instructional resources will be used to provide and build those skills? What resources are available?
- What methods are most effective in developing requisite abilities? What methods will you use to verify competency (e.g. “show me” evaluation, written test, oral quiz)?
- How often will education be repeated, reinforced and updated?

It is important to ensure that education and training fit target employees. It needs to be targeted, timely and useful to the employee. Click here to access resources and ideas you can use for your driving workplace.

Vehicle Preparedness

It is important to match vehicles to intended applications and to ensure each vehicle is inspected and maintained such that the employer, and the driver, is confident it can be operated without posing undue risks to anyone. Policies and procedures should address the following basic questions:

- What selection criteria will managers apply to ensure vehicles are capable of performing intended work? Will front-wheel drive work or is all-wheel drive necessary? Heavy duty or light duty? What equipment and safety features are required? Which vehicle types or equipment are not acceptable?
- How often will vehicles be inspected? Which items will be inspected? Who will conduct inspections? How will they be documented? What conditions or defects render a vehicle inoperable?
- To what standards will work vehicles be maintained - manufacturer’s recommendations or a more rigorous standard? What documentation is necessary? Who will review maintenance records?

Click here to find sample vehicle inspection forms. Learn more about how to conduct vehicle inspections. Visit our Vehicle Maintenance pages for more information.
Supervision

Many employers find it challenging to supervise drivers - it’s difficult to observe a worker when their mobile workplace is many kilometres from the supervisor’s office. Nonetheless, employers are obliged to conduct driver inspections just as they need to periodically observe and assess on-site workers. The section on roles and responsibilities should broadly indicate supervisory responsibilities while this section should answer the following questions.

- How will supervisors observe and assess drivers? Will they conduct regular ride-alongs?
- How often will driver reviews occur?
- What criteria or items will supervisors observe and evaluate?
- What documentation is necessary? What feedback is provided to each employee?

Distracted Driving

Driving while distracted has become the leading cause of crashes and fatalities. Talking or texting on a phone while driving is the biggest part of the problem. It’s not just teens who are a concern – too many drivers of all types - managers hurrying to a meeting, supervisors directing employees, real estate agents, workers driving a well-labelled company vehicle and professional drivers operating big rigs – have been observed engaged in a cell phone conversations, texting, or fiddling with their navigation or audio system. Distracted driving is such an important and pervasive road safety issue, that your organization deserves a clear Distracted Driving Policy.
Fatigue Management

Fatigue is a leading contributor to motor vehicle crashes. Acute and accumulated driver fatigue present significant hazards in many workplaces especially for those with lengthy commutes, extended work shifts, or who do shift work that includes driving at night or in the very early hours of the morning. Your road safety program should describe the steps the organization and drivers will take to manage fatigue. To help develop your policies and procedures, visit our Fatigue Management section.

General Driving Practices

Some practices an organization requires of employees are driven by legal obligations; others are steps the organization has determined are key to running their business – it’s simply “the way we do things around here”. Depending on their importance and how much detail is necessary to explain the driving practice, each one may deserve a separate policy and associated safe work procedures. Another way to clarify expectations is to present them as a set of straight-forward one or two-sentence rules.

Even though some of your rules may be legal requirements all drivers must obey, reinforcing those requirements in your plan demonstrates employer commitment to upholding laws and clarifies that the employer expects drivers to comply. The rules your organization agrees upon might include:

- wearing a seatbelt when driving and requiring passengers to do so
- observing and obeying posted speed limits
- compliance with Electronic Communication Devices laws, and expectations around use of other devices or equipment not covered by that law (if not addressed in a Distracted Driving Policy).
- prohibition against operating a vehicle when impaired by fatigue, alcohol or prescription/non-prescription/illicit drugs
- expectations of the conduct and activities of passengers if allowed (e.g. no horseplay)
- whether employees are permitted to carry pets
- cargo securement
- ergonomics – adjusting mirrors, seat and headrest before driving, taking breaks during long trips, organizing and stowing items in the cab, etc.
- rules for operating a motor vehicle on a work site or in restricted zones
- expectation that drivers conscientiously self-assess to confirm they are fit to drive before operating a vehicle (well-rested, mind on task, etc.)
- not smoking in work vehicles
- transportation of flammable, volatile or otherwise hazardous materials goods
Young or New Workers

Although a road safety program should be designed to apply to all employees who drive in the course of their work, it should give special consideration to new or young workers.

Young workers usually don’t have the driving or life experience that older, seasoned drivers have. And, there is substantial research indicating young drivers generally have a higher risk profile than older drivers. To address this, your plan should answer:

- What extra training and orientation is necessary to prepare these workers for the driving you will assign them? Will supervisors more frequently assess the driving of young or new workers during their first year or two?
- Are there certain driving assignments supervisors cannot assign a young driver until they have demonstrated specific competencies? Is there opportunity to provide a driving mentor?
- In some organizations, drivers are asked to operate out of multiple work hubs, travel between regions and work at different sites. Even though it may be the same organization, driving rules and protocols may vary from location to location. What measures are in place to ensure drivers that are new to those locations are oriented to local procedures?
- Any vehicle or vehicle type that an employee has not operated before is a new workplace. When you replace their 2006 pickup with a 2014 model of a different brand, what steps will be taken to confirm they understand and can operate the new features? Even though an employee has proven their skill on operating the one-ton cube van, how will you confirm they are ready to operate the five-ton flat deck?

Driving Alone

Regulations describe working alone as circumstances “where assistance would not be readily available to the worker in case of an emergency or in case the worker is injured or in ill health.” Your employees might sometimes drive in situations where assistance is not readily available such as driving in remote locations or at night. In addition, motorists don’t always stop to aid another motorist who has pulled to the side of the road because of vehicle failure or an emergency. In these situations, an employee is effectively “working alone”. Your road safety plan should describe procedures the organization will take to minimize driving alone, and steps they will take to safeguard employees who have to drive / work alone.

A check-in mechanism combined with a travel plan communicated to the check-in contact can work well for these situations. Some organizations use in-house resources to manage check-ins, while other organizations use a third-party service provider to monitor drivers and confirm check-ins. Employers with employees driving alone typically require them to carry a reliable means of communications such as a charged cell phone or satellite phone.
Emergency Procedures

Develop procedures that explain what drivers are to do if they are involved in an emergency. Look at your hazard assessment and think about the emergencies you can reasonably anticipate employees might experience such as a vehicle crash, a disabling mechanical failure or a co-worker that does not check-in at the agreed upon time. What measures should they take to ensure their safety?

Incident Reporting and Investigations

As unwelcome as they are, motor vehicle incidents are an opportunity to learn about the gaps in your system that enabled or allowed the incident to occur. Take that opportunity to develop and implement measures to ensure similar events don’t occur in the future. To draft this section, think about the following questions:

- Which motor vehicle incidents will be reported? Only those required by Regulation? All incidents? All incidents and near misses? Who is responsible to report the event? To whom do they report it? Is there a form or format they should use? How will reports be documented and filed?

- Which motor vehicle incidents will be investigated? Only those required by Regulation? All incidents? All incidents and near misses? Who will participate in investigations: managers, supervisors, safety committee members, specialists? What is the investigation process?

- Who will receive and review investigation reports? Who is responsible to ensure corrective actions identified in investigation reports are implemented?

To learn more about conducting an investigation, try: CCOHS  WorkSafeBC  Health and Safety Ontario

Rental Vehicles

If employees in your organization may be renting vehicles for use, include guidance on how they should select, inspect and use those vehicles. This section should address:

- How will employees confirm a rental vehicle is configured for its intended use and sufficiently equipped for anticipated road and weather conditions?

- Do you deal with a preferred rental vendor that is familiar with your requirements and will provide vehicles equipped for conditions (e.g. emergency kit, winter tires)? What should an employee do if they arrive to find the rental vehicle is not properly equipped?

- Will the driver inspect the rental vehicle before using it? How will they deal with deficiencies?
Personal Protective Equipment

Describe the personal protective equipment (PPE) employees are expected to carry, and when and how they are expected to use it. Requirements will vary depending on circumstances, but it is a good idea for drivers to always carry a hi-visibility garment (vest or pullover shirt), gloves, safety glasses and head and foot protection appropriate for the sites and places to which they travel.

Vehicle Emergency Kits

Provide a policy explaining that vehicles should be equipped with an appropriate emergency kit and provide a list of the items to be included in such kits.

Each vehicle and driver should be prepared to deal with emergencies. The contents of a vehicle emergency kit depend on the driving circumstances and conditions that driver will encounter. A good practice is to carry a basic emergency kit and add items to handle winter driving or travel in remote locations. Store the contents in a sturdy, waterproof plastic container or a zippered gear bag for protection. Inspect kits every six months to confirm all the contents are there and check expiry dates on any perishable items to ensure they are still good to use.

Basic Vehicle Emergency Kit

| high-visibility garment: vest, shirt or jacket with hi-vis trim | reflective safety triangles | survival blanket |
| Flashlight with extra batteries, or a hand-crank LED flashlight/radio | booster cables | whistle |
| fire extinguisher - ABC Type | Level One first aid kit and manual with seatbelt cutter | Help / OK sign |
| clothing and footwear for the season, hat and gloves | bottled water | non-perishable high energy foods (e.g. trail mix, chocolate) |

Additional Contents for Winter or Remote Conditions

| windshield scraper and snow brush | gas line antifreeze, windshield de-icer | shovel |
| sleeping bag / warm blankets | traction mats or kitty litter or sand | candles, waterproof matches and tin to hold the candle |
| tire chains | compass, maps / GPS system | wheel chocks, tire repair kit or extra spare tire |
| duct tape, light rope | tow strap | tools: tire wrenches, screw drivers, adjustable wrench, pliers, multi-function knife |
Licensing and Insurance

Your company likely already has standard practices regarding the insurance coverage it purchases for company-owned vehicles. However, if your employees drive employee-owned vehicles for work, your road safety plan should describe the insurance requirements they must meet. Many organizations require employees using their vehicles for work-related travel to have liability insurance coverage of at least $2 million.

As well, to help protect both the company and the employee, your plan should include a requirement that employees insure their vehicle according to the correct rate class. Include a sentence indicating that such insurance must be in place before the vehicle may be used for work and that employees will be required to provide a copy confirming such coverage when the employer asks for it.

Be aware that if work vehicles (company-owned or employee-owned) are used to transport three or more passengers, Part 17 of the Regulation specifies additional operational requirements. Consider increasing liability insurance coverage for those vehicles.

Disciplinary Process

Although a road safety plan is developed and presented as a tool for success, every organization could encounter circumstances in which an employee fails to comply with legal or company requirements. It may be necessary to implement disciplinary measures to achieve correct behaviours. It benefits all parties – owners, supervisors and employees - to think about and be aware of what those steps are before the situation arises.

Your organization may already have such a policy in place but consider reviewing it to add driving-specific considerations. Think about the following questions:

- What action will be taken if an employee accumulates too many penalty points while driving for work? How many is too many? Six? Nine? More?
- What action will be taken if an employee is involved in repeated at-fault crashes?
- What steps will the company take in response to very serious driving infractions (e.g. that result in the company vehicle being impounded or that cause substantial property damage or injury)?
- If the company determines that because of repeated driving non-compliance, it is necessary to assign an employee to duties that do not include driving, what steps will the employee and company undertake before those privileges and work are returned?