

# Build Your Road Safety Program

## Know The 10 Essentials

Having a robust road safety program will help protect your workers and your bottom line. We've compiled a list of the 10 necessary components – actions that must be taken and conditions that must be achieved – of a successful program. Whether you have a large fleet with professional drivers, a couple of vans with employees making local deliveries or staff using their own vehicles to meet with customers, use these 10 essentials to proactively manage your crash risks and help improve your organization's road safety performance.

### 1. Understand your responsibilities for employees who drive for work.

Employers have a range of obligations – financial requirements, obligations to shareholders, ethical and social duties to the public, clients and customers. They also have important legal obligations for the safety of their employees, including employees who drive in the course of their work.

### 2. Establish Management commitment.

For a road safety program to achieve its goals, management needs to demonstrate its commitment to safety. They need to provide the resources necessary to ensure the program can succeed, and be engaged in the implementation of road safety measures. Management must be seen to support the plan – they need to lead by example.

So, how do you convince management to make road safety a priority? Develop a business case explaining the human and financial costs of work-related crashes and the significant benefits of an effective road safety program. Gain their commitment using regulatory information, analysis of previous crashes, industry comparisons and driver surveys, and by outlining practical measures and their benefits from the Employer and Supervisor Tool Kit.

### 3. Engage and communicate with employees.

Another necessary ingredient of a program that works is the active involvement of employees – the people that have to apply measures described in the safety plan. They have the best knowledge of the hazards they encounter and likely have good ideas on how to eliminate or minimize risks caused by them. Get their help to build a better plan. Listen to their suggestions. Respond to their feedback.

Engage them in regular safety meetings. Hold impromptu tailgate meetings. Host driver-led lunch and learns. Communicate with them not to them. Involve them in a road safety conversation that matters to them.

### 4. Identify driving related hazards, evaluate risks and define safety measures: driver, vehicle and journey.

This is a crucial step. How well you identify hazards and evaluate them to understand how these hazards create risks for drivers in your organization defines how well you can build safety measures to reduce risks and prevent crashes, injuries and losses.

Look across your organization and consider all the circumstances in which employees operate vehicles. Observe how employees conduct their driving work. Ask them what they think is dangerous in their workplace. Review incident investigations and injury reports.

One way to frame this exercise is to think about hazards posed by the driver (fatigue, distraction, or skill limitations), the vehicle (sub-standard equipment or maintenance), and the journey (road, weather or traffic conditions).

### 5. Develop road safety policies and safe work procedures (SWPs).

A road safety program needs policies that describe the plan for action. It's key to include a policy that states management's commitment to road safety, explains its role in implementing the program and describes the responsibilities of owners, managers, supervisors and employees. Safe work procedures describe the steps or practices employees need to follow to minimize the risk caused by a hazard (for example, what employees need to do before

getting behind the wheel and the behaviours expected of them while they are driving). The Road Safety Template identifies many of the policies and procedures that should be included in your plan.

## **6. Establish driver selection criteria and a regular driver-review process.**

You may already check for a driver's license before you hire an employee, but how often does your organization require drivers to submit a current driver's abstract? Who reviews them? How do supervisors evaluate driving behaviours and skills to confirm drivers are qualified to undertake the work you assign?

## **7. Adopt rigorous vehicle selection, inspection and maintenance processes.**

Determine what safety features and equipment are necessary for the vehicles the organization uses. If it uses a variety of vehicles in different applications, some features and specifications will vary by application. When investing in new vehicles, take advantage of safety features such as electronic stability control and forward collision warning systems to help drivers avoid crashes or reduce the severity of injuries in the event of a crash. Consider crash-test rating information from reputable insurance companies and vehicle manufacturers. Implement regular vehicle inspection and maintenance requirements.

## **8. Adopt an incident-management process and make sure incidents are effectively reported, investigated and followed up.**

As unwelcome as they are, motor vehicle incidents are an opportunity to learn about the gaps in your road safety program that enabled or allowed the crash to occur. Develop and implement measures

to ensure similar events don't happen in the future. Decide what events will be reported (for example near misses and crashes), how they will be investigated, who will be involved in the investigation and how the report and follow-up actions will be implemented and tracked.

## **9. Establish how you will deliver, monitor and administer your road safety program.**

Who will be responsible for managing the program? Who will administer it? Establish a document management system. If possible, adapt existing processes to include road safety components. Develop tools to explain procedures and track results such as online reporting and hard copy forms. Allocate resources to ensure drivers have the training, equipment and resources necessary to follow procedures. Develop metrics to track performance. Determine how management will be involved.

## **10. Regularly evaluate program effectiveness and make improvements.**

Like other business systems, road safety is a continual improvement process. Designate a group of individuals such as the (Joint) Occupational Health and Safety Committee with management and employee representatives to annually review the organization's results, evaluate the effectiveness of existing measures and propose ways to improve past performance. Ask them to think about how the business has changed during the year and design methods to address emerging road safety hazards.

For more information and resources visit:  
[https://www.ihsa.ca/topics\\_hazards/road\\_safety\\_program.aspx](https://www.ihsa.ca/topics_hazards/road_safety_program.aspx)