

Case Study Two

Sainsbury's

BACKGROUND

Sainsbury's is a large retail organisation, employing 180,000 personnel, 91,000 of which are full-time staff (with the remainder being made up of part-time staff and students). The organisation has 453 supermarket locations and owns and operates out of 6 depots. The Charlton depot serves 120 of the stores in the UK (all stores are in the UK, except for one store in Calais).

NATURE OF OPERATION AND DRIVING ACTIVITIES

The organisation's driving activities are split between commercial (LGV) drivers and personal (company car) drivers. Sainsbury's owns 118 LGVs, which total an average of 75 - 80,000 miles per year, as they carry out the delivery of goods. The organisation also contracts-out Ryder vans for the home delivery service (but these are not Sainsbury's' own vehicles or drivers). The organisation operates 1650 company cars (which are split between allocated car drivers, who need a car for their job, and status car drivers, who have a car because of their job grade). Allocated car drivers drive approximately 30,000 miles per year, whilst status drivers drive about 22,500 miles per year. Sainsbury's also uses about 500 hire cars per month, but if an employee needs a car frequently they will become an 'allocated car driver' and be given a company car. The change around time for company cars is either 4 years or 90,000 miles, with allocated car drivers often reaching 90,000 miles sooner than 4 years. The organisation also operates about a dozen road-going fork-lift trucks.

THE POLICY

Why the policy was developed

The Staff Council recognised that people had concerns in the area of work-related driving, so this was passed along the company chain to the Group Health and Safety Committee. The organisation tries to be proactive in implementing their safe driving policies, so the policies are often not implemented in a response to, for example, a high number of incidents as they try to avoid this by planning ahead. The Group Health and Safety Committee recognises the legal responsibility and the benefits for the staff, and therefore the company, of implementing safe driving policies.

Who developed the policy

The Group Safety Adviser is the representative for Sainsbury's on the British Retail Consortium Risk Management Committee, which meets regularly and provides an external forum in which counterparts, from various organisations, can discuss their policies and share ideas. Within Sainsbury's, the Group Safety Adviser writes the internal policy, which is then signed off by the board and monitored by the Human Resources Director. A task force was put together about 18 months ago to review the whole of company driving, with a view to improving safety. This was set up to get colleagues input and involve some of the employees. The Group Safety Adviser sets the policy and standards that the company should be working to, but the day to day running of the policy is down to the Divisional Directors.

What the policy covers

The organisation does not, at present, have a policy specific to travelling by car, but it is referred to in some of the policies detailed below. The organisation's policies, relevant to this area, are therefore as follows:

The policy for 'travelling on business' (not just driving) covers the following issues:

- Essential Web Sites (for preparing for your journey)
- Immunisations
- If things Go Wrong, e.g. illness, loss of passport / visa / money / luggage (detailing the incident and the action to be taken).
- General Points, e.g. reporting medical conditions to your manager, reporting accidents, personal security alarms, travel insurance.
- Visiting Suppliers, Depots etc.
- Before Travelling Overseas
- During your travel and/on arrival at your destination
- Returning to the UK

The 'Charlton Distribution Centre – Depot Safety & Transport Procedures' is a Sainsbury's In-house Training Induction Pack, for LGV drivers, which covers the following issues:

- General Depot Safety Procedures: safety jackets and footwear; depot speed limits, zebra crossings, one-way systems, parking, stop signs on depot grounds; fire assembly point; non-smoking policy.
- Transport Procedures: reporting for duty; tractor and trailer identification; safety and damage checks / reporting; drivers hours; reminder of rest and driving periods.
- Docking and Undocking using the "C" lock system (trailer-coupling procedures)
- Trailer defect / inside wash reporting system
- Shunters
- Transport Procedures: load security checks; refrigeration; journey departure
- Charlton Depot gross vehicle weights
- Running times from Charlton Depot
- Transport Procedures: procedures at the branch; returning to the depot; yellow lines and boxes painted on depot; vehicle refuelling; service day indicated inside the tractor; trailer status indicator; end of duty; useful telephone numbers.

How the policy is communicated and implemented

ROAD SAFETY PROCEDURES

The following procedures are in place:

Risk assessment	An annual risk assessment is carried out for company car drivers, with the employee's line manager (see specific examples below for more details)
Driver training	This is not compulsory for everyone and is provided to meet training needs, which are decided through the risk assessment process for company car drivers. Commercial drivers have in-house training and access to a cd-rom package (see specific examples below for more details).
Journey scheduling	The commercial drivers are provided with a journey schedule for new routes, but they are often familiar with the route they are taking anyway. No schedules are officially provided for company car drivers, although there might be local arrangements. Sainsbury's has a general policy for 'travelling on company business', and the issues covered in this are listed in the above 'what the policy covers' section.
Alternative means of transport	The recommendation is to consider other means of transport for company car drivers (buses, trains, tube). However, the drivers are usually going to more than one place in a day, so it can be difficult to use public transport in these circumstances. Commercial drivers are obviously different and cannot use other means of transport.
Guidance on mobile phone use/hands free sets etc	Guidance is in the main policy. About 4 years ago employees were issued with a hands free kit, if they had a company car and a mobile. The guidance suggests to avoid taking or making calls

	when driving – either pull over, keep to a minimum, or don't make any calls at all.
Vehicle maintenance procedures	Commercial vehicles: Charlton is the only depot with an in-house maintenance team (other depots contract out). Vehicles are strictly maintained and fixed straight away. Company cars: the responsibility is on the individual company car driver to take the car in for a service and keep them maintained. Sainsbury's has a program to monitor company car mileage, to estimate when a service is due, and thus send out a prompt to remind the company car driver.
Vehicle standards and ergonomic checks	Compare vehicles with the European standards for vehicles. Do general emissions tests. Also look at the ergonomic environment of the car: there is a certain amount of person-vehicle matching with company cars, e.g. if the driver is 6' 5" tall, or if the driver has back problems they buy special customised seats for employees.
Breakdown guidance / assistance	The Fleet Accident Repair Group provide a full service for notification of accidents, breakdown, tyre changing etc. Drivers have a freephone number to ring. Alternatively, they can phone the depot, who will send out assistance.
Incident report	The line manager is notified, the driver guide requires the driver to phone the accident repair group (same as above). The intranet and bulletin boards display major incidents and all incidents are documented (see specific examples below for more details).
Incentive Programmes	Commercial drivers take part in the RoSPA Star Scheme: £150 for a clear record for up to 5 years, if then have a clear record for 5 years, receive £250. No team incentives, just individuals. No incentives for company car drivers.

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF PROCEDURES

Risk Assessment

The 'Annual Risk Assessment for drivers of Company Cars' (see attachments 1 and 2) is issued to all company car drivers and must be completed once per year, as part of the Personal Management Agenda (PMA), or when ordering a new / replacement vehicle. The risk assessment looks at such things as the vehicle being used, the driver's details (e.g. health, competence, experience, licence), the type of work, the hours being driven, the mileage being driven, the time of day the driving takes place etc. As a result of this risk assessment there may be a number of actions taken, in order to reduce the driver's risk level, such actions may include: driver training, reduced driving hours, a new car, a medical or an eyesight test for the driver etc. If a driver has experienced a lot of incidents they will be checked and driver training may be recommended.

The risk assessment form was issued to all company drivers when it was implemented about 1 year ago. It has made drivers more aware of the risks when driving and has improved morale, as drivers feel that the company is taking an interest. The commercial drivers do not complete this risk assessment form. A full copy of the form is provided in attachment 1.

Driver Training

Driver training may be recommended for company car drivers as a result of the risk assessment procedure. Commercial car drivers have access to a cd-rom training system, which is run by the Southern Transport Manager.

The current form of driver training used for the company car drivers was implemented about 18 months ago (but Sainsbury's have had driver training in place for 5 years now). Initially, drivers went on the training in teams (e.g. a group of occupational advisors, and some high mileage company car drivers), when it was originally implemented in this format (18 months

ago). Currently, however, drivers are sent on the driver training according to their training needs and their driving skills, as measured through the annual risk assessment.

Commercial drivers, at the Charlton Depot, complete an interactive cd-rom package for driver training, and this is managed by the Southern Transport Manager (the cd-rom package is sponsored by the Institute of Advanced Motoring, RoSPA, Brake, Volvo, and Zurich Insurance). The package covers various issues of driving, i.e. attitude, knowledge, behaviour, and hazard perception, and drivers make their way through these four sections, which serve to test their knowledge, skills and perceptual abilities in these 4 areas, whilst also raising the driver's awareness. The Transport Manager then has all the driver's results, in each of these 4 areas, on file and can then identify the strong and weak areas to be targeted as necessary.

Incident Reporting / Documentation

The Southern Transport Manager uses a cd-rom package called 'Crash COUNT', which can record all incidents including all the details and conditions of each incident, e.g. time, road conditions, visibility, location, journey, speed, collision with, damage to vehicle, third party information, cause of crash, factors influencing crash, mobile phone usage, sneezing, road rage, and so on. This data can then be manipulated in various ways to identify various high risk groups / areas / locations / causes / driver demographics etc. the package also includes the input of information regarding driver details, such as the driver's last health check, last assessment, last training etc. Pictures of the accident can also be scanned into the package, which can be helpful information for raising risk awareness.

This cd-rom package is, however, only used for the commercial drivers, and only includes those accidents that are actually reported. The package has been employed for 3 years, since 1998, and is a very useful tool, as it may be used to help hone in on areas such as training: the package can be used to display the number and cost of the accidents and, therefore, what the company would save by training.

A memo was issued to all drivers (commercial and company car drivers), containing the phone numbers to ring for breakdown assistance and incident reporting, the depot takes over the procedure once the driver has phoned in. The company car incidents are also all documented, but one improvement suggested by the company car drivers, when the cd-rom package was demonstrated, would be to use the 'Crash COUNT' package for the documentation of all driving accidents and not just commercial vehicle accidents. The data would then be much more useful, and easily accessible.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

The overall costs of developing and implementing the road safety programme are seen to be the cost of employee time spent administrating and managing it, as well as the costs of the driver training (which, at £100 a day, is considered to be a nominal fee). In terms of the benefits, these are in the form of improved morale, value, and respect - as the drivers feel that the company is taking an interest in their driving safety. Drivers have experienced levels of increased awareness when driving, as a result of the risk assessments and driver training programmes. Additionally, the employees feel that there is a "knock-on effect" to their personal driving, through the organisation making them more aware, providing them with more information, and improving their driving skills, so making them safer drivers.

In terms of more tangible benefits, these are difficult to quantify as the policies implemented by the organisation try to be proactive, before high levels of accidents happen, so there are no previously high statistics against which to compare any 'improvements'. The policies are also still relatively quite new, so the organisation is still observing the benefits and receiving favourable comments which are suggesting improved levels of morale, value, and feelings of respect.

LESSONS LEARNED

The Group Safety Adviser and the Group Risk and Insurance Manager suggested that, when contemplating the introduction of a work-related safe driving scheme, one should talk to colleagues and peers and ask employees for their input, as most of the issues will be raised, if the organisation has a good communication system. It is also useful to check any relevant publications and look at, and discuss with, other companies about what they are doing, as organisations can benefit greatly from discussion and sharing ideas.

The overall main barriers to implementing a safe driving scheme would probably depend on how seriously the organisation takes Health and Safety as a whole. The implementation of such a scheme could be very difficult without senior management support, although that was not an issue within Sainsbury's, where Health and Safety issues have top management support and commitment. Problems may arise where people believe that driving is not business-related and the implementation of driver training can also be very emotive when an employee is recommended for driver training, as everyone thinks that they are a good driver. In order to deal with these barriers, it is essential to get people to realise that driving is work like any other, yet the culture does not always seem to recognise this, so the culture needs to be changed by raising awareness and increasing communication. Issues of corporate manslaughter may prove to be helpful as, the more companies are held to task for the actions of their employees, the more likely they are to do something about it. Driving safety is much more at the forefront now, which helps to raise awareness.

CURRENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

There will be a likely prompt for a review of the existing schemes around the March / April 2002 period. The organisation is looking at trying to raise the awareness and communication of the driver training programme, so that driver training can ultimately be more accessible. Current policies also recommend that public transport, as an alternative to driving, should be considered more often. The guidance on mobile phone usage will also be incorporated into the risk assessment and updated in the policy.

Additionally, there were a couple of recommendations from the drivers with regards to possible future improvements. One commercial driver recommended that, once a driver is getting older (aged 60 years and above), the driver assessments should take place at quarterly intervals (whereas, presently, drivers are only assessed biannually). There are currently no incentives for company car drivers to drive safely, unlike the commercial drivers' RoSPA star scheme. According to a company car driver, this can potentially encourage bad habits, speeding, etc. Although having a company car is an additional perk, for an allocated car user, there is no actual incentive to drive economically and save the company money, so there is a dilemma of how to implement an incentive scheme. Such recommendations from the drivers may therefore be looked at in the next review.

Sainsbury's Attachment 1

Annual Risk Assessment for drivers of Company Cars to be completed once per year as part of a PMA and when ordering a new / replacement vehicle

(see the Company Car Risk Assessment Guidance)

Journey Details	
Distance covered	
Time spent driving	
Road types i.e. motorway, suburbs, city.	
Vehicle Details / Suitability	
Regular maintenance	
Loads to carry	
Mobile phone	
Drivers Details	
Valid License	
Experience / Competence	
Health / Stress	
Accident history	
Action required / recommendations	

Journey Details

Distance covered

Time spent driving

Road types i.e. motorway, suburbs, city.

Vehicle Details / Suitability

Regular maintenance

Loads to carry

Mobile phone

Drivers Details

Valid License

Experience / Competence

Health / Stress

Accident history

Action required / recommendations

Sainsbury's Attachment 2

Sainsbury's Company Car Risk Assessment Guidance

Journeys

Consider the average mileage of each journey and the total annual mileage driven, then see if any of the longer journeys can be done using other types of transport.

Is the time spent driving excessive?

Are breaks taken in line with the Department of Transport guidance? (15 minutes break every 2 hours).

Can an overnight stay be used to reduce the time spent driving in a day?

Consider the work load and the roads / speed limits that will be used to cover the distances, taking account of congestion, weather, day or night driving and the work content at the destination.

Risk reduction ideas

Better work scheduling, more rest breaks, alternative route, overnight stay, alternative transport.

Vehicle

Is the vehicle suitable for the task, i.e. engine size, body type, comfort and safety, for which it will be used?

Is the vehicle regularly serviced?

Are the routine driver checks carried out? i.e. tyres, lights etc.

Will loads need to be transported?

If so is the vehicle suitable / does it require modification?

Will the driver need a 'hands free' phone kit?

Driver's Details

Does the driver have a valid driving licence?

Does the driver have sufficient experience and competence for the vehicle selected and the journey to be undertaken? (where possible refer to previous record).

Does the driver have any health or stress issues that may affect their safety ? (complete Medical Questionnaire and refer to Occupational Health where necessary).

Discuss driver's accident record (provided by the Insurance and Risk Management Department) and identify any action / training required.

Risk reduction ideas.

Consider driver training, contact Occupational Health with concerns about the drivers fitness and where special authorisation is required for vehicle modifications.

Annual Risk Assessment for drivers of Company cars

To be completed once per year as part of a PMA and when ordering a new / replacement vehicle (see the Company car Risk Assessment Guidance)

Factors to consider

Comments

Journey Details

Distance covered

Time spent driving

Road types i.e. motorways, suburbs, city

Vehicle Details

Regular maintenance

Loads to carry

Mobile phone

Drivers Details

Valid Licence for type of vehicle being driven

Experience / Competence

Health / Stress

Accident History

Action Required

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Colleague's signature Date

Manager's signature Date

Note

To be retained in colleagues PMA folder