

FLAGSHIP

IN BRIEF



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Michael Kemp reporting affairs as he finds them

Legal opinion is free at FSG

INSTRUCTIVE: "A Guide to Corporate Manslaughter & ORR" by City H&S specialist defence lawyer Michael Appleby (Fisher-Scoggins LLP) is expert legal opinion for FSG clients.

A FUEL economy meter displaying instant and average mpg in a dashboard dial is going into all future Nissan cars "to encourage eco-driving with a 10 per cent, or more, rise in mpg".

ALL 2008 model cars are to have automatic tyre pressure monitoring - in America. A dashboard low pressure indicator is to be standard from all car makers. So expect it here too.

WOMEN value a company car higher than male colleagues rate the 'perk'. To women a company car outranks a pension, says the Bank of Scotland.

WHILE around 78 per cent of people care about the environment, 86 per cent are against CO₂ taxation. They see it as a scam, shows research by accountants Macintyre Hudson.

ADAPTIVE headlights improve driver night vision and reduce stress by self-adjusting intensity and direction of light in relation to vehicle speed and steering.

A TYRE with 'regenerating tread' is being launched by Michelin. Its XDA5 truck tyre "gives 30 per cent extra life by developing renewed grip from more useable tread and enhanced traction".

'1-in-3 firms is unconcerned about driving safety'

On warpath to catch 'shirking' employers

ONE thousand working drivers are to be questioned to identify employers shirking road risk responsibilities.

Last year among small and medium-size businesses one-in-three appeared to be a commitment dodger.

For 31 per cent of employees questioned "believed their employers were not very or not at all concerned about employee safety in work driving".

Approached at random in February 2006 by the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) 1000 working drivers revealed:-

SAFETY: 53% never received driving safety information or driver training from their employers.

MEDICAL checks were not required by 70 per cent of employers.

VISION checks were ignored by 64%.

INSURANCE checks were made by one-in-four employers of employees receiving mileage allowances for own-car business use - 75% did not bother.

MoT: 27% of employee cars were checked but 73% were not.

LICENCE validity was confirmed by 54% of employers; 46% did not bother.

SPEED: work pressure encouraged speed-

ing, said 48% of employees questioned.

Now IAM is "preparing repeat research to see if and how things have improved, because our fear is that a high percentage of employers are still doing nothing in spite of new legal demands.

"The frightening scale of their lack of concern for employees at work at the wheel is deeply worrying," says IAM.

In Scotland 37% of employees received employer work driving safety training last year, while in Northern Ireland the figure was 7% and in West Midlands 5%.

In Wales 70% of employees were "completely aware" of a work policy on speeding, compared with 27% in East Midlands

In South West England 28% of employers checked driver vision yet only 7% did in the North East, says IAM.

FSG Chairman Geoffrey Bray says: "Among many employers there is an amazing, or in truth appalling, lack of understanding of their responsibilities to their employees working at the wheel on the road.

"Only when they are embroiled in a serious crash and police start in-depth questioning do many company executives become attentive - when it's too late."

FSG business vehicle management systems meet all employer responsibilities.

Go back to L-school every 5 years?

AT EU direction a Driver Certificate of Professional Competence is to be compulsory for bus, coach and lorry drivers starting in September next year.

It will be needed by new bus and truck drivers and gradually all PSV-HGV drivers will have to take a week (35 hours) of officially

approved retraining every five years.

Expect that to lead to a National Vocation Qualification (NVQ) for all working drivers, even those who use cars only occasionally for business.

And the work driving NVQ is likely to require tested proof of risk awareness at the wheel.

L-training guru Prof. Peter Russell is "convinced that driving is destined to be a qualification needed to obtain work. It will be a new school-leaving qualification.

"Government is set on quantifying every occupation with a vocational standard, including driving."

A quango called GoSkills is steering in training - now.