ORYX
INSURANCE BROKERAGE INCORPORATED

Fleet Operations Safety Guide

Safety Guidelines for Fleet Operations

Oryx Loss Control

Loss Control will add value, focus on outcomes and results, support our Underwriting and Agency partners in making better risk selection and pricing decisions, and proactively affect change with our policyholders to minimize losses and improve profitability.

Our objective is to provide high-quality services that add value to our underwriting results and positively impact our customers. We will focus on management controls, impact on employee behavior, root cause of accidents, and account profitability by providing services that focus on measurable results. We provide an altruistic service to others by preventing accidents and injuries.

Obviously, no loss-control service can guarantee zero employee injuries, a "fire-proof" building or immunity from lawsuits. Insurance is still the ultimate safeguard in an imperfect world, but Loss Control is an important component to preserve your resources.

Safety Policy Statement

A formal safety program should be established for effective control over the vehicle operations of any company. The program should start with a safety policy statement.

The safety policy should document top management's philosophy and commitment for safe operations of the vehicle and outline the responsibilities within the organization to achieve the policy goals.

The policy statement should be broad in scope and should be developed by senior management. The policy should be brief, concise and well publicized throughout the company.

Sample Policy Statement:
Motor vehicle collisions, on and off the job, are the primary cause of death and injury in the United States. All accidents, whether they occur on public streets or on our corporate property, are costly to our company and to the public.

Causing bodily harm to our employees or others, damaging of goods in transit, damaging property of others, or causing congestion on the highway are the most important reasons to control the use of the vehicle fleet in a way that reduces the likelihood of traffic collisions.

It is the policy of this company to provide service with safety. Our company will strive to prevent motor vehicle accidents and operate our vehicles in a safe and courteous manner. It will be the responsibility of all employees to see that this policy is adhered to in all aspects. A fleet safety program has been developed to assist us in this effort. This program is being integrated into our daily operation and is now a part of our overall philosophy.

President's Name _____

Vehicle Safety Program

A written vehicle safety program based on the safety policy should be established. It should contain driver selection procedures, safety rules, and procedures for vehicle selection, inspection and maintenance, accident reporting and investigation, driver training, and incentive programs. The program should define management and employee roles and responsibilities.

This manual provides guidelines for developing a vehicle safety program.

Driver Selection

Effective driver selection procedures should ensure that only the best qualified applicants are hired. Since their activities are mostly unsupervised and occur away from the company, thorough screening is necessary to achieve the best safety results.

Establish a written job description for the use of all company vehicles. If the type or weight of the vehicles differ, separate job descriptions may be required.

An application form should be completed in the applicant's own handwriting and should be signed and dated by the applicant. The application should inquire about prior experience operating company equipment and the types of licenses held by the driver.

Reference checks with previous employers should be made and personal interviews with the driver should be conducted. An applicant's attitude about driving situations can be learned during the interview process.

Drug testing procedures should be established for all prospective drivers of company vehicles. A drug and alcohol blood test should be given on a pre-hire basis. Random and/or reasonable cause testing should also be considered, and post-accident testing should be required for all drivers. Legal counsel should be obtained for establishing drug testing requirements.

Motor Vehicle Records

Motor Vehicle Records (MVR) should be ordered directly by the employer to review the applicant's past driving record and to assure that the driver has a valid license. Obtain, at minimum, annual MVR updates for all employees who operate company vehicles.

MVRs should also be ordered for employees who drive their own vehicles for company business (non-owned auto exposure). These drivers should be considered as if they are regular operators of the company fleet. Certificates of personal auto liability insurance in amounts equal to the company's current policy should be obtained and updated annually.

MVRs can be obtained from the state Department of Motor Vehicles, and most states have online order services. Consider criminal background checks on all prospective driving employees, especially if the driver has lived in more than one state in recent years.

Safety Rules

Vehicle safety rules provide the standards that drivers and management are expected to follow in controlling the hazards and exposures of vehicle operations. Written vehicle safety rules and procedures should be distributed to management and employees who will be affected by them.

General rules include obeying all traffic laws, as well as prohibition of unauthorized passengers or drivers, use of radar detectors and use of cell phones while driving. Additional company and regulatory rules can be added as desired.

Because alcohol is the cause of almost 50% of all motor vehicle fatalities in the United States, drinking alcohol in a company vehicle or possessing an open container of alcohol in the passenger compartment of the vehicle should never be allowed.

Requirements for keeping vehicles clean and in good condition and curtailing personal use of the vehicles should also be established.

Individual driver files that contain only driving or vehicle information such as equipment inspection, repair and accident reports should be available for periodic audits by management and safety personnel.

Written and consistently enforced disciplinary procedures should be established in available documents such as the employee handbook and vehicle safety manual. The driver should know what actions will be taken as a result of violating regulatory and company fleet rules.

Department of Transportation (DOT) requirements should always be followed concerning rest periods and log usage. Proper CDL or other licenses are required depending on vehicles driven.

Incentive Program

An incentive program is not a substitute for a formal safety program. Specific rules and standards must be established and monitored. A properly conducted incentive program can be a supplement to a formal fleet safety program and promote safe driving.

The most common incentive plan provides for formal recognition at a company-sponsored event. The award can be a certificate, lapel pin, plaque or monetary gift. The recognition event may be held annually. The unit of measure can be one year to a lifetime without an atfault collision. Management can determine the basis for the award, but the criteria should be consistent and easily understood.

Another incentive program is "safety bingo" in which drivers who have not been involved in a traffic infraction can have their name entered in a drawing. The winning name receives money, a prize or time off.

More complex incentive programs may be based on a multitude of factors. A series of criteria could include the number of hours or years without a traffic accident and/or a set number of years without any infractions or preventable accidents. For this type of program, the more impressive the safety record, the more attractive the prize or reward.

Management may combine all three above examples or devise its own incentive program. The main consideration is to make the rules consistent and easily understood. If an award or recognition is too easy to obtain, the program and safety goals will not receive the needed respect. If winning an award or receiving recognition becomes too difficult, interest in the program could suffer.

Oryx is available to assist in providing certificates or plaques for your incentive program. Please contact the Loss Control Department for further information.

Vehicle Selection

Vehicle selection standards should establish minimum safety requirements, be suitable for the business operation, and reflect current and future needs. Accidents are less likely when drivers use properly selected and reliable vehicles.

Both initial cost and maintenance costs should be considered in selecting vehicles. Standardization by manufacturer, model type or components may be cost effective.

Some advantages of standardization are reduced parts inventory, mechanical efficiency due to familiarity with the vehicle, lower driver abuse of vehicles and better evaluation of the vehicle suitability.

Vehicle Inspection

Vehicle inspection is important in assuring that a vehicle is in safe operating condition. Written vehicle inspection standards provide the basis for a responsive, preventive maintenance program. Early detection of defects or problems will reduce the likelihood of a breakdown or traffic collision caused by maintenance problems.

Develop a vehicle inspection report that directs the driver in a systematic check for and recognition of vehicle deficiencies. Each inspection by the driver should be documented and turned in to the fleet supervisor for review. If maintenance is deemed necessary as a result of the inspection, the vehicle should be repaired as soon as possible.

Because the driver assigned to a vehicle is on the road many hours a day, he/she is in the best position to perform a periodic visual inspection of the company vehicle. The inspection should include items such as tires, lights, mirrors and physical damage including windshield cracks.

The fleet supervisor should review all driver self-inspection reports. At least on a semi-annual basis, the fleet supervisor should make a physical inspection of all company-owned vehicles and review the inspection reports submitted by the drivers. The drivers' inspection reports and the supervisor's vehicle inspection reports should be kept on file.

Vehicle Maintenance

A written preventive maintenance program (PM) establishes procedures that, when consistently applied, reduce operational costs, reduce accidents from vehicle defects and improve public opinion.

Keeping vehicles properly maintained is a serious commitment from management. It may appear that the cost of preventive maintenance is prohibitive and repairing vehicles after a breakdown is more cost effective, but just the opposite is true. A fleet that is maintained on a consistent and scheduled basis is safer for the employee/driver and the general public where the vehicle is operated daily.

Preventive maintenance is performed on a mileage or time basis in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. A full chart taken from the owner's manual and a spreadsheet can be developed for the PM schedule for each vehicle.

Typical PM jobs include oil and filter changes, lubrication, inspection and (if needed) tightening of belts, tune-ups, brake work, tire inspection and rotation, hose inspection/replacement and radiator maintenance. Demand-type maintenance or major work is performed when the need arises and often includes large items such as engines, transmissions and drive trains.

In a PM program, the driver notes potential problem areas or the need for routine maintenance. A central person should also be designated to oversee preventive maintenance schedules on all company vehicles. Procedures for monitoring the performance of vehicle repairs and maintenance by in-house mechanics or outside contractors should be established and audited on a regular basis. Steps should be taken to correct noted defects.

Recordkeeping for all vehicle maintenance and repair work is part of an effective PM program. Records will permit management to review vehicle performance, determine if additional maintenance work on a vehicle is necessary, recognize the source of problems overlooked in maintenance, identify equipment that is not operated correctly, and evaluate when to replace a vehicle.

Accident Reporting and Investigation

All vehicle accidents should be reported and thorough investigation should be made by management or other qualified personnel. Prompt investigation can reveal the root cause of the accident, and controls can be implemented to reduce the probability of recurrence.

Well-defined and written procedures will prevent driver confusion and facilitate gathering information as soon as possible after a traffic accident. Rules may include the following:

- Stop immediately and protect the accident scene as much as possible.
- Tend to any injured persons at the scene.
- Contact the company office and the local police.
- Do not make any statements accepting responsibility for the collision.
- Only address the facts of the event.

A vehicle accident report form should be placed in each vehicle glove box so the driver can write down the details of the accident while it is still fresh in memory. If possible, photos should be taken of the accident scene.

Management should contact the insurance company to report the accident, collect the police report and review the accident report completed by the driver. After reviewing records, management should interview the driver to inquire not only about his/her version of the accident but to also discover the conditions and situations that led to the accident.

Management should determine if the accident was preventable or not preventable. (See the training section of this manual for definition of "preventable accident"). Based on management's evaluation, established disciplinary procedures may be taken.

Thorough accident investigation can lead to:

- Improved driver selection procedures
- Improved vehicle inspection and maintenance procedures
- Changes in traffic routes (avoidance)

Driver Training

Training provides the knowledge, skills and motivation to drive safely and control fleet losses.

A road test and observation should be part of the probationary period for all new drivers. The length of probation is a management decision. A periodic safety meeting discussing safe driving techniques should be conducted by management.

Discussion topics could include:

- Company driving rules
- New regulations
- Defensive driving techniques
- Backing techniques
- Adverse weather driving
- Vehicle maintenance requirements
- Accident reporting
- Emergency procedures

Attendance at a local defensive driving class (traffic school) should be strongly considered as a training tool.

Preventable Accident

A "preventable accident" is one in which the driver failed to exercise every reasonable precaution to prevent the accident.

There are five characteristics of a defensive driver:

- Knowledge of laws and safe driving strategies
- Alertness to be able to focus attention on driving and the changing conditions that occur
- Foresight to recognize hazards in advance and know what actions can be taken
- Judgment to decide on the safest action to take
- Skill to carry out the action

Techniques used to recognize hazards while driving:

- Scan the road ahead, behind and next to your vehicle.
- In congested traffic such as city driving, scan one or two blocks ahead or to the next intersection.
- On rural roads or less congested highways, scan to the next hill or curve.
- Check the rear-view and side-view mirrors every three to five seconds.

Understanding appropriate actions:

- Slow down in bad weather.
- Leave additional clearance between your vehicle and the one in front of you.

Acting Correctly in Time

If the driver recognizes the potential hazards while driving and understands the appropriate actions that can be taken if there is an unexpected hazard, choosing the correct action will be taking the one with the least resistance or damage.

Speed

For every 10 miles per hour over 50 mph, you double your chance of being killed. Improper speed is a direct cause of almost 25% of all fatal collisions and many violations.

Major Consequences of Speeding:

- Increased gas consumption
- Longer stopping distances
- Violation of traffic laws
- Increased chance of fatality
- Decreased peripheral scanning ability

If everyone else is speeding, what should you do?

If you choose not to speed, drive in the right lane or, on a multi-lane expressway, in the lane with the least visible hazards. Be aware that slower traffic must remain to the right and keep within the legal limits posted on the freeway.

Right-of-Way Intersections

Another action that contributes to collisions and violations is failure to yield the right-of-way. A lot of drivers think at certain types of intersections they have the right-of-way. The fact is that the law gives the right-of-way to no one. The right-of-way is yielded. Most situations in which we need to yield or fail to yield occur at intersections. Most collisions in cities and urban areas occur at intersections.

INTERSECTION SAFETY FORMULA:

KNOW – Know who should yield, but don't expect the other driver to do so. Scan the street ahead at least two blocks in the city or to the next intersection. In rural areas, scan to the next hill or curve.

SHOW – Show the other drivers what you are going to do when approaching an intersection. Use your directional turn signal and move into the correct lane. Also, be sure to turn off the signal after you have completed the turn.

SLOW – Slow down as you approach the intersection and be prepared to stop at any moment.

GO – Finally, go through the intersection when it is safe to do so.

Left and Right Turns

Another error that occurs at many intersections is unsafe or improper turns.

Making a Right Turn

1. Turn on your directional signal at least 100 ft. before the intersection.
2. Check your right blind spot for other traffic: vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, etc.
3. Move into the right lane when it is safe to do so.
4. Obey the traffic control device (light).
5. Yield to pedestrians and/or vehicles in the intersection.
6. Make your turn.

Making a Left Turn

1. Turn on your directional signal (turn signal).
2. Move into the left lane.
3. Obey the traffic control device (light).
4. Keep your wheels pointed straight. If you are struck from behind, you will not be pushed left into oncoming traffic.
5. Yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians.
6. Make your turn into the corresponding lane.

Following Too Closely

What do you think are the most common actions that cause rear-end collisions?

- Following too closely and not stopping in time

Most drivers think they can stop in time. However, at a speed of just 20 miles per hour, it will take an average vehicle between 40 and 44 ft. to stop. And, this is if all driving factors are good. The faster you drive, the more distance you'll need to stop. At 65 mph, it will take about 231-295 ft to stop.

Determining a Safe Following Distance

Use the two-second rule when following another vehicle. If all conditions are good (the driver, vehicle and environment), watch the rear bumper of the vehicle in front of you. As the rear bumper of the vehicle ahead passes a fixed object, such as a pole or sign, begin counting 1001, 1002, so that your front bumper should not pass the same fixed object until you count to 1002.

Two-second plus rule

If you are driving in adverse conditions, use the two-second-plus rule. The rule is to add an additional second of space for following distance for every adverse condition:

- If you have a heavy load, add one second.
- If you are towing a trailer, add one second.
- If the roads are wet, add one second.
- If you are being tailgated, add one second.
- If you are towing a trailer, the road is wet, and you are being tailgated, add three seconds.

Passing

Passing another vehicle while moving should not be done for the following reasons:

- Just to get in front
- Late for an appointment
- Habit
- Because you can

Before deciding to pass another vehicle, three questions should be asked:

- Is the pass necessary?
- How much will I lose if I do not pass?
- Why am I passing?

Never pass in the following areas:

- No-passing zones
- School zones
- Within 100 ft. of a railroad crossing
- Within 100 ft. of an intersection
- Within 100 ft. of a tunnel
- At curves or hills
- On two-lane or narrow bridges
- Construction zones
- Hospital zones

Rules regarding a legal pass:

Maintain the proper following distance behind the vehicle in front.

You will be able to see down the road for oncoming traffic and thus avoid a rear-end collision if the vehicle suddenly stops.

Before starting the pass:

- Look ahead.
- Signal left.
- Check blind spots.
- Verify you are not being passed.

Making the pass:

- Move into the left lane and increase speed.
- Communicate with your horn or light (if necessary).

After the pass:

- Signal right.
- Make sure you can see pavement between your vehicle and the one you just passed.
- Check blind spot.
- Move right back into the proper lane.