

Charles Davis, RoSPA's head of driver and fleet solutions, says: "We can prove that putting in place a comprehensive occupational road risk management programme has numerous spin-offs.

"But the major benefits are significant cost savings that can be attributed to accident reduction and the introduction of a safer and more efficient method of driving, legislative compliance and the fact that businesses are taking care of their most important resource – their employees. The management of occupational road risk and the dangers that at work drivers experience, makes this the biggest health and safety issue this country faces."

Cranfield and Peak launch psychometric on-line assessment

Cranfield University and driver training specialists Peak Performance are launching an on-line driver risk assessment developed specifically for company car and van drivers based on psychometric principles.

Called the Fleet Driver Risk Index (FDRI), the ground-breaking new product is based on 20 years of academic research into the psychology of driver behaviour and uses psychometric principles to predict how company drivers are likely to behave behind the wheel.

Human factors contribute to around 95% of road traffic accidents and this new approach allows fleet operators to more accurately identify high-risk driver behaviour and implement the specific training needs to tackle it, thereby reducing the potential for road crashes.

The FDRI has been developed by driver behaviour expert, Dr Lisa Dorn (above), star of the recent BBC series *Road Rage* and director of the Driving Research Group at Cranfield



University. She is also research director of DriverMetrics, a new company set up by Cranfield to handle the launch and implementation of FDRI.

Dr Dorn says: "In addition to identifying those drivers at high risk of road traffic accidents, the FDRI also shows some of the reasons why people are at high risk.

"By identifying the specific behaviours that contribute to a driver's risk of accident, we are able to specify more targeted training interventions aimed at reducing the risk. Understanding what is causing increased risks for individual drivers thus enables fleet managers to manage and reduce the risk through more targeted training."

A series of training courses have been developed by Peak Performance specifically to address the behavioural issues identified by DriverMetrics.

The courses feature workshop training to heighten risk awareness and on-the-road personal focus training, one-to-one with a Peak instructor, for those classified as a high risk.

In order to maximise its benefits, the FDRI, which costs £15 to £25 per person depending on the number of drivers taking the assessment, should be undertaken by all employees who regularly drive for work, says Dr Dorn.

Individual drivers answer questions on a secure, user-friendly accessible

website, which can be customised and branded for each individual company. Within an hour of the on-line assessment being completed, the driver receives the results via email, while a designated person, usually the fleet manager, receives an executive summary of the individual driver's profile, identifying the risk of likely involvement in accidents and the personal attributes contributing to the risk. The profile also recommends specific training interventions.

In addition, an on-line management information system allows fleet managers to monitor and manage the results of the assessment and to take appropriate actions where necessary, thus contributing towards discharging the company's duty of care to its drivers.

New study reveals energy drinks combat fatigue-related crashes

Consuming energy drinks can significantly improve driver performance and stave off the likelihood of fatigue-related accidents, according to new research by Transport Research Laboratory (TRL), commissioned by GlaxoSmithKline.

Driver fatigue is known to be a significant road safety concern. It is estimated that around 10% of all road accidents can be attributed to sleepiness, and that figure increases to around 20% for all motorway accidents.

The TRL report on the evaluation of energy drinks containing glucose and caffeine revealed that consuming a 330ml drink, containing 60g of glucose and 40mg of caffeine, improved vehicle lane keeping, reaction times and distance keeping from the vehicle ahead in simulated driving conditions.

Past studies have shown that

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