



Driving and Vehicle Standards

Policy

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Version Control

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| | | | |

1 Introduction

1.1

This policy applies to all Team Medic employees and staff working on the behalf of Team Medic, who are required to drive a vehicle on the behalf of Team Medic.

1.2

The very nature of an ambulance service leads the public to associate ambulance personnel with a high standard of driving skill and road behaviour. This policy is to ensure that the high standards in driving are maintained and to reduce the amount of collisions that occur involving Team Medic vehicles. These collision result in unacceptable personal injury to employees and other road users, considerable money and materials being wasted in repairs and unnecessary down time whilst vehicles are being repaired.

1.3

Working together with staff Team Medic is committed to developing and implementing an effective risk management system to reduce the number and consequence of road traffic collisions by ensuring:

2 Aims and Objectives

2.1

The key objectives of the policy are:

1. To reduce the number of road traffic collisions (RTCs).
2. To ensure that high standards of driving are maintained.
3. To ensure that Team Medic vehicles are fit for purpose and maintained to a safe standard.
4. To ensure that the vehicles are properly used and maintained by staff.
5. To provide a consistent approach to reporting and investigation of vehicle incidents.

2.2

To ensure all employees are aware of their **Legal** responsibilities with regard to emergency and non-emergency driving and having a consistent approach across all.

3 Definitions

3.1

Team Medic vehicles are vehicles owned, leased or lent to Team Medic.

3.2

Private Vehicles are vehicles owned by employees or volunteers to carry out Team Medic business, e.g. employees using their own cars to drive to meetings during work time (not commuting to and from work).

3.3

Driving having control over the functions of the vehicle, e.g. steering brakes etc. to cause and guide the movement of a vehicle.

3.4

Driver refers to any person who may be required to drive a Team Medic vehicle or their own vehicle as an agent for Team Medic e.g. contractors.

3.5

DVLA – Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency.

3.6

IR-form the incident reporting form used by Team Medic as part of its incident reporting and investigation system.

4 Policy Statement

4.1

The Board of Directors are committed to promoting and establishing high standards of health, safety and welfare for its employees by promoting a positive culture and supporting policies and procedures.

4.2

Team Medic has a statutory duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which places specific responsibilities on the employer to provide a safe working environment, where reasonably practical to do so, not only for its staff but also for patients, visitors, voluntary staff, contractors and others that are affected by the work of the organisation.

4.3

Driving is a vulnerable area for Team Medic and to manage this it purchases suitable vehicles which are regularly maintained and employees are given driver training applicable to their role. It is possible that an employee may be involved in a collision which results in a fatality and Team Medic may be vulnerable under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 as well as the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporation Homicide Act 2007. Under a new approach courts will look at management systems and practices across the organisation, providing a more effective means for prosecuting the worst corporate failures to manage health and safety properly. Team Medic will be guilty of the offence if the way in which its activities are managed or organised causes a death and amounts to a gross breach of a duty of care to the deceased. This policy assists in the management of these risks.

4.3.1

This does not detract from Team Medic's responsibility to its employees to do everything in its power to eliminate / minimise the risk of injury to its employees and volunteers and persons carried in vehicles.

4.4

This document provides instruction and guidance to managers and employees on all aspects of driving for and on behalf of Team Medic.

4.5

All managers throughout Team Medic are required to instigate actions to ensure the successful implementation of this policy within their area of control.

4.6

Team Medic is committed to ensuring that staff receive clear direction concerning their duty of care to colleagues, patients and the general public when driving under emergency or blue light conditions.

4.7

Team Medic are conscious of the impact and responsibility we have as an organisation on the environment and that under emergency conditions, we are unable to reduce our carbon footprint. Outside these parameters anyone driving a Team Medic vehicle should, where it is appropriate, reduce the impact on climate change by avoiding hard acceleration or hard / excessive braking. This will be monitored on all Team Medic vehicles which are fitted with data recording technology.

5 Arrangement

5.1

Advice on specific arrangements e.g. licensing, fitness to drive, work hours can be found appended to this policy at Appendix A

6 Responsibilities

6.1

The Managing Director is accountable for all driving undertaken within Team Medic.

6.2

Team Medic acknowledges the need and commitment in taking this policy forward and will ensure that the necessary resources are made available, in line with the Risk Management Policy.

6.3

All Managers and Directors have a responsibility for the implementation of policies and procedures relating to the driving of Team Medic vehicles under their control.

6.4

Senior Managers have responsibility to ensure investigations into incidents are carried out in accordance with either the incident or road collision investigation procedure. They are also responsible for the completion of the Incident Report Forms. RTC forms and implementation of action plans to reduce the recurrence of similar incidents.

6.5

The Operational Manager (OM) will be responsible for the overall supervision and implementation of the Driving and Vehicle Standards Policy. This is undertaken by conducting Driving Licence checks for new starters, and performing Driving licence checks on a bi-annual bases.

6.5.1

The OM will also be responsible for providing investigation support to other managers where a Team Medic vehicle has been involved in a serious injury or fatal RTC.

6.6

The allocated Manager has a responsibility to ensure investigations into incidents are carried out in accordance with either the incident or road collision investigation procedure. They are also responsible for the completion of Incident Report Forms, RTC and implementation of action plans to reduce recurrence of similar incidents.

6.7

The training department is responsible for ensuring that all staff who drive at work are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities, during induction.

6.7.1

Training operational staff to ensure that they are aware of their legal responsibilities under the Road Traffic Act and are safe and competent to drive and re-assessment thereafter.

6.7.2

The assessment of all drivers within Team Medic includes fleet and lease car users.

6.8

The Operations Director is responsible for ensuring that each vehicle owned, leased or hired by Team Medic has road tax, MOT certificate, and is serviced according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

6.9

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are made aware of this policy and for keeping their staff up to date with any policy revision and to ensure that their staff adhere to this policy.

6.9.1

Line Managers are to check driving licences at least twice a year in accordance with the current Team Medic guidelines. Through the licences check self-ware linked directly through the DVLA

6.10

Employees are responsible for ensuring that they follow this policy at all times.

6.10.1

Ensuring adherence to current Road Traffic Regulations, it should be clearly understood that private vehicles must observe speed restrictions and all other road traffic regulations, even when responding to a call. There are no exemptions from the law. It is everyone's interest that proper care should be taken.

6.10.2

Compliance with their statutory duty under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. I.e. to co-operate with their manager so they can comply with their duties e.g. use vehicles in accordance with training and following procedures.

6.10.3

Taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others that may be affected by their actions this includes driving vehicles safely.

6.10.4

Ensuring that their driving licences are current and they must inform their Line Manager of any endorsements as soon as they occur.

6.10.5

Ensuring that they do basic safety checks of oil, fluids, tyres, lights etc. as per legal requirements and manufactures recommendations.

6.10.6

Operational staff should ensure that if they breakdown in a Team Medic vehicle control is informed and their advice followed (e.g. concerning the patient).

6.10.7

Operational staff should ensure that if they are involved in a RTC in a Team Medic vehicle they contact control and their advice followed (e.g. concerning the patient).

6.10.8

Operational staff should ensure they inform their manager of any health issues which may be impact on their ability to drive Team Medic vehicles or vehicles used on behalf of Team Medic.

6.10.9

Ensuring they are fit to drive at all times and be aware of the implications which alcohol, illicit substances and medication have on driving. The law provides upper limits on alcohol before prosecution and staff are reminded that for every unit consumed an hour must pass before the effects are dissipated. There are however no limits imposed for illicit substances and staff found to be under the influences of drugs will be arrested and prosecuted by the Police if caught in charge of a vehicle. Impairment to drive is a serious offence and those found to be unable or unfit to perform their duties even if under the legally prescribed limits

may face disciplinary action. Team Medic reserve the rights to perform random drugs and alcohol tests without prior warning.

6.10.10

Staff are responsible to fob in when driving so that there is a record of who is driving the vehicle at any time.

7 Driving Under Emergency Conditions

7.1

The only circumstances under which Team Medic employees should use Blue lights is when **ALL** of the following circumstances pertain.

7.2

The employee has undergone appropriate advanced driver training as designated by Team Medic.

7.2.1

The Driver Standards Agency document entitled Core Competencies for drivers responding to emergency arising audible and visual warning devices.

7.2.2

The Department of Health letter September 2001 Training and core competencies for drivers of all emergency vehicles under Blue Light conditions.

7.3

If control has authorised the use of blue lights it must be recorded on the control room log and the driver and or attendant must record the reason given on the vehicle check sheet or patient report form.

7.4

When travelling on route to hospital and the patient's condition has deteriorated control **must** be contacted to record the reason for use.

7.5

When travelling with an escort (Nurse, Doctor and or Paramedic) and they request the use of blue lights control must be informed giving the escorts name and the reason for use, this must also be recorded on the Patient Report Form.

7.6

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When travelling on route to a call and an incident has happened in front of you blue lights may be used to protect the scene but control **must** be informed of this to record your delay and record the use of blue lights. A Patient report form **must** also be completed.

7.7

When carrying out organ work, the use of blue lights will be documented on the control log.

7.8

When carrying out psychiatric work the use of blue lights can be authorised by the escort then the escort's name and reason for use should be passed to control.

7.9

When carrying out psychiatric work if the patient's behaviour or actions are causing concern then the driver can use blue light however after the journey control must be informed with the reason for use.

7.10

When carrying out psychiatric work if the patient is in a place of safety then blue lights can **only be** used if requested by the centre booking the transfer.

7.10

Whenever blue lights have been activated a patient report form **must** be completed for that journey stating times reason for use and who has authorised them.

8 Competence

8.1

Advice on specific competencies can be found appended to this policy at Appendix C.

9 Monitoring

9.1

The Control Room Manager will receive data and exception reports of RTC's.

9.2

The training department is responsible for monitoring and recording all drivers training activity under the auspices of Team Medic.

9.3

The training department will hold the training of all drivers who are appropriately trained to operate under emergency conditions. Staff may request to see their individual record by prior arrangement with the department.

9.4

GM is responsible for monitoring accident investigations and remedial action. The OM will hold a database of individual driver accident and produce a trend analysis report to identify potential risks.

10 Audit and Review

10.1

The management will review the content of training courses in accordance with changes in the law or current best practice on a two yearly basis or when significant changes occur or when there is guidance of significant change.

11 Equality Impact Appraisal

11.1

Team Medic has undertaken an equality impact appraisal to identify the impact the policy may have on disparate groups e.g. pregnant women, disabled etc. and how it is mitigating any adverse impact.

12 Associated Documentation

12.1

The following appendices and supporting policies and procedures form a part of this policy:

12.1.1

Appendix A : Arrangements – Vehicle and Equipment.

12.1.2

Appendix B: Arrangements – Licensing and fitness to drive.

12.1.3

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Appendix C: Driver Competencies.

12.1.4

Appendix D: Emergency Driving and the Law.

12.1.5

Appendix E: Arrangement – Fines and Charges.

12.1.6

Appendix F: The Department of Health letter September 2001

12.1.7

Appendix G: DSA Blue Light Users Working Party

12.2

Fleet Driver's Handbook

12.3

Risk Management Policy

12.4

Health and Safety Policy

12.5

Incident Reporting Procedure

13 References

13.1

Health and safety at Work Act 1974.

13.2

Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended.

13.3

IHCD Driver Training Manual.

13.4

Roadcraft The Police Driver Training Manual

13.4

DVLA Medical standards of fitness to drive – Summary of disorders which affect Group 1 and 2 entitlements.

Appendix A Arrangements – Vehicle and Equipment.

1 Vehicle Classification

Team Medic operates a wide range of vehicles such as A&E Ambulances, Patient Transport Service vehicles (PTS), stretcher ambulances (PTS S) wheelchair accessible vehicles (PTS WAV), Rapid Responses vehicle (RRV), quad responders as well as a lease car fleet.

1.1 Vehicle Insurance

1.1.1

Team Medic is responsible for ensuring that all vehicles, including leased / hired vehicles, are correctly insured for use when operating on Team Medic business. In addition, Team Medic may be responsible for ensuring that employees who pay a financial contribution for personal use of such vehicles will have additional cover for Social, Domestic and Pleasure purposes.

1.1.2

If employees use their own car for Team Medic purpose they are responsible for making provision with their insurance company that they have the relevant cover for the journeys they undertake.

1.2 Vehicle Excise Licence

1.2.1

Team Medic will renew vehicle excise licences on all Team Medic owned vehicles, and will be responsible for ensuring that all vehicles are issued with a valid vehicle excise license.

1.2.1

The leasing / hiring company owns leased vehicles and they are responsible for renewing the excise license.

1.3 MOT Inspection and Certification

1.3.1

All ambulances including PTS vehicles and RRVs are tested every 12 months. Cars used on behalf of Team Medic which are over 3 years of age require a current MOT certificate, renewable every year. Team Medic is responsible for ensuring that all vehicles owned by them comply. It is the responsibility of the Lease / Hire Company to advise Team Medic of the need for an MOT.

1.3.2

Although MOT certificates are valid for 1 year this does not guarantee that the vehicle is roadworthy all drivers have a responsibility to ensure the vehicles are roadworthy, safe and fit for purpose.

1.4 Vehicle Servicing and Maintenance

1.4.1

The manufacturers' recommended servicing intervals should be adhered to and be arranged by the Operations Manager in the cases of Team Medic owned vehicles. For leased / hired cars the driver is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is serviced at the recommended intervals.

1.4.2

Servicing and maintenance of Team Medic owned vehicles will be arranged by the Operations Manager.

1.4.3

All vehicles used on Team Medic business must be maintained and repaired to the legally required standard.

1.5 Vehicle Safety Checks

1.5.1

It is the responsibility of all drivers to ensure the vehicle is roadworthy and legally compliant before using it by carrying out relevant checks, e.g. tyres, lights, brakes, indicators. The roadworthiness of the vehicles and of tyre condition is the legal responsibility of the person driving the vehicle.

1.5.2

All drivers must check oil, water, tyre pressures at the start of their shift or working day. In wintertime the driver should check levels and top up the radiator with anti-freeze if necessary.

1.6 Use of Mobile Phones / Radios in Vehicles

1.6.1

Mobile Phones, Team Medic prohibits employees from using hand held mobile phones when driving under any circumstances, including under emergency conditions. (Fleet Drivers Handbook).

1.6.2

Team Medic will ensure that when employees are required to drive and use the phone, this will be done within the law and under the safest conditions possible. Where possible Team Medic vehicles will be fitted with hands free phone equipment, however where one is not fitted it is anticipated the attendant will manage the phone and where an attendant isn't available the phone will go un-answered. If any person is prosecuted for using a mobile phone in their vehicle they will be responsible for paying any fine incurred.

1.6.3

Drivers must be aware that using a mobile phone under any circumstances whilst driving will still distract attention from road and must not be used without justification to avoid any unnecessary distraction. It remains the driver's responsibility to ensure that their standard of driving is not detrimentally affected by such phone.

1.6.4

Sat Navs drivers should not use Sat Navs whilst the vehicle is in motion and are responsible for their actions whilst in control of the vehicle.

1.7 Vehicle Interior

1.7.1

All portable equipment and anything that could act as a projectile in the event of a collision and cause injury must be adequately secured within the vehicle.

1.7.2

Adequate means of securing staff patients and escorts will be provided so far as is reasonably practicable.

Appendix B: Licensing and Fitness to Drive

1 Driving Licence

1.1

All employees who drive vehicles owned or leased / hired by Team Medic are required to present their driving licence to their Line Manager at intervals. Checks will be completed with DVLA to ascertain if any penalty points have been accrued.

1.1.1

Drivers convicted of endorsable offences will incur penalty points. Where 12 or more points are accumulated within 3 years the driver will be disqualified. Re-deployment of disqualified staff will be considered but disqualification from driving could lead to termination of employment with Team Medic if there are no suitable alternative roles available.

1.1.2

Any employee who is required to have a driving licence by Team Medic and receives any penalty points must report this to their Line Manager within 2 weeks of receiving them. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

1.2 Fitness to Drive

1.2.1

Drivers who are required to drive under emergency conditions will have undertaken a more advanced medical assessment.

1.2.2

Any employee undertaking driving activities on behalf of Team Medic must inform Team Medic immediately of any health change, eyesight problem or other condition which could impair his / her ability to drive safely. In addition, all employees who drive under emergency conditions or who are responsible for transporting patients must inform Team Medic via their Line Manager if they develop any of the medical conditions outlined in the DVLA Group 2 standards.

1.2.3

Where staff develop a medical condition which prevents them either temporarily or permanently undertaking driving duties which are essential to their role every effort will be made to re-deploy staff into a suitable alternative role. Suitable alternative roles particularly on a permanent basis however may not always be available and therefore development of such medical conditions could ultimately lead to termination of the employee's contract.

1.3 Driving and Working Hours

1.3.1

This applies to all staff that are driving on Team Medic business.

1.3.2 Rest Breaks

1.3.2.1

It is the duty of the driver to ensure they are alert and as safe as possible. It is therefore their duty to ensure they take at least a 20 minute break for every 4 hours of continuous driving. Driving does not include sitting in a stationary vehicle.

1.3.2.2

Due to the nature of ambulance work it may be necessary to exceed this maximum in exceptional circumstances.

1.3.2.3

Consideration will be given wherever possible to re-scheduling non-emergency journeys and / or routes into account exceptional adverse weather conditions.

Appendix C Competence

1 Driver Competencies

1.1

All members of staff who are required to drive as an essential part of their duties must hold a valid driving licence, appropriate for the type of vehicle being driven. In addition, all staff or those working on our behalf, which are required to drive under emergency conditions or who carry patients, must undertake training and or assessments as detailed below.

1.2

As far as reasonably practicable Team Medic will ensure that all staff exercise all due care, attention and professionalism in their standard of driving at all times especially when responding to emergency incidents.

1.3

It is the responsibility of the driver to familiarise themselves with the controls of the vehicle before any journey as promulgated in the IHCD Drivers Manual and as taught on both DSA and Team Medic Driving courses.

1.4 Driving behaviours

1.4.1

Team Medic drivers must focus on their legal responsibilities and ensure that attitudes remain appropriate while driving under both routine and emergency conditions.

1.4.2

Team Medic drivers must drive to the system of car control taking into consideration the characteristics of the vehicle that they are driving and their own ability, as per the Team Medic driving assessment.

1.4.3

Team Medic drivers must be aware that risks cannot be justified by arguing that they are taken in the interests of the patient. The overriding responsibility in any situation is to drive safely. The standard of driving must be appropriate and above reproach in order to set a proper example and gain the respect and co-operation of the public.

1.4.4 Reversing and Manoeuvring in confined spaces

1.4.5

Team Medic vehicles when reversing or manoeuvring in confined spaces **must** be guided by a second person outside the vehicle (usually the Attendant) with due regard to their own safety. There may be exceptions to this if the attendant is treating a seriously ill patient in which case if there is doubt in the driver's mind about the situations they are manoeuvring into they must stop and alight from the vehicle and assess the situation before proceeding. Anyone guiding a moving vehicle **must** wear a Hi Viz

1.4.6

RRVs must also be manoeuvred with due care and again where the driver is unsure or there is any doubt that the route is clear the driver must alight the vehicle and assess the situation before proceeding.

1.5 Training Requirements

1.5.1

Specific driver training requirements for staff working within all tiers of the service are as follows.

1.5.1.1 Operational Emergency Drivers

1.5.1.1.1

All employees or those working on our behalf that are required to drive under emergency conditions are required to have either successfully completed an IHCD D1 and D2 Driving Course or other emergency service driving course. Regular assessments for Team Medic staff will be completed every 5 years and will be completed by an accredited driving assessor to ensure competency is maintained or following a recommendation made from an untoward incident or accident investigation.

1.5.1.2 Operational Non-emergency Drivers

1.5.1.2.1

All operational employees or those working on our behalf that are required to drive patient carrying vehicles under non-emergency conditions are required to undertake the IHCD D1 course or equivalent. Regular assessment for Team Medic staff will be completed every 5 years by an accredited driving assessor to ensure competency is maintained or following a recommendation made from an untoward incident or accident investigation.

1.5.1.3 Non-operational Drivers

1.5.1.3.1

All employees including sub-contractors must undertake a driving assessment, undertaken by a Team Medic approved driving assessor prior to driving any company vehicles.

1.6 Maintaining Standards

1.6.1

Any member of staff that has had three or more Team Medic vehicle collisions in any twelve-month period will be subject to a review of their driving competency by the GM. It will be the responsibility of the member of staff's Line Manager to refer them for this review.

1.6.2

Any driver involved in a collision that results in a fatality or hospitalising injury, or causes significant damage to a Team Medic, public vehicle, or other property whilst working under the auspices of Team Medic will immediately be restricted from driving until the incident has been fully investigated. This will be monitored by the DSM who will ensure that all investigations are conducted as soon as is practicable. Where necessary staff will be re-deployed in a non-driving role until the investigation is concluded.

1.6.3

Any driver involved in a collision which results in an allegation of Dangerous, Reckless or Careless Driving occasioning in possible Police prosecution whilst working under the auspices of Team Medic will immediately be restricted from driving until the incident has been fully investigated. This will be monitored by the DSM who will ensure that all investigations are conducted as soon as is practicable and provide support to the member of staff involved. Where necessary staff will be re-deployed in a non-driving role until the investigation is concluded.

1.6.4

Team Medic is committed to ensuring that all staff has the appropriate training and education to fulfil their duties in respect of driving across Team Medic. Where staff fail to pass the required training course or competency assessment they will be subject to Team Medic Assessment Procedure.

Appendix D: Emergency Driving and the Law

1 Driving under Emergency conditions

1.1

Under normal circumstances all Team Medic drivers must comply with Road Traffic law. All staff must drive within their capabilities and that of the vehicles, road conditions and visibility. Staff who are **appropriately qualified and trained (IHCD Ambulance Driving Award or equivalent)** may claim certain exemptions against Road Traffic Law in order to respond to emergency calls. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure they can justify the need to claim these exemptions.

1.1.1

Only staff that are required to respond to emergency calls to provide pre-hospital care to patients or provide managerial support at incidents will be trained and authorised to claim the Exemptions to the Road Traffic Act. It will always be the driver's responsibility to justify claiming any exemption to the Road Traffic Act. Staff who drive Team Medic vehicles must undergo training for the type of vehicle they are expected to operate and the conditions in which the vehicle is operated under. (see table 2).

Table 2: The level of Driver training required for Team Medic drivers

| Blue Light requirements | Driver Grade | Level of Training | Additional Skills/ Training if Required |
|---|---|--|--|
| No | Non Operational members of staff | DSA driving licence | Only if required to drive vehicles other than class B (cars, light vans etc) |
| No with the exception of Neonatal staff | Patient Transport staff | DSA driving licence + cat C1 and D1, IHCD driver training or equivalent | 4x4 and trailer course should the individual be required. |
| Yes | Ambulance Care Assistant, A&E Support, Tech and Paramedic | DSA driving licence + cat C1 and D1, Full IHCD driver training or equivalent | Specialist training required for RRV - high speed 4x4 on road 4x4 off road |
| Yes if response able | Team Medic Managers | DSA driving licence + cat C1 and D1, Full IHCD driver training or equivalent | Specialist training required for RRV - high speed 4x4 on road 4x4 off road |

1.1.2

Lease cars and other vehicles belonging to Team Medic, rented or loaned to Team Medic that are fitted with Blue lights must only be used on emergency calls by staff who have had the appropriate training and have a licences that covers the category of vehicle that they are driving.

1.1.3

Individual Managers lease vehicles should only be fitted with Blue lights and sirens if the manager is responsible and has a requirement for this equipment to be fitted as part of their role within Team Medic. Authorised by the Managing Director.

1.1.4

Unless the manager is on-call or is attending an incident on behalf of Team Medic removable roof-mounted blue light units must be removed. They must also be removed if a family member or other named driver is using the vehicle.

1.2 Multiple Responses

1.2.1

Where several vehicles are responding to the same incident location the vehicles should not proceed in convoy but maintain a safe distances between each vehicle so that if one was to stop in an emergency the other vehicles will not collide with it.

1.2.2

Where more than one vehicle is engaged in an emergency response to the same location, each vehicle should use a different tone where variable audible warning equipment is fitted to warn motorists of presence of more than one vehicle.

1.3 Grading the type of response to an Emergency Call

1.3.1

The decision on grading the type of response to an incident or job may be made by the following people:

1.3.1.1 Control

1.3.1.1.2

Where a situation arises where the use of emergency driving conditions is warranted that was not passed to control then the driver is to inform control so that it is recorded.

1.3.2

The grading of the level of response should not dictate the standards of driving employed by the driver of Team Medic vehicles who should place their own safety and that of the patient and other road users.

1.4 The law and the Driver

1.4.1

The law in relation to the legal exemptions are taught on Team Medic driving courses. Drivers of Team Medic vehicles have a responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with the legal exemptions concerning the driving of Team Medic vehicles.

1.4.2

Whilst undertaking an emergency response or whilst engaged on a course for the purpose of training for such a role, the law will exempt Team Medic drivers from various aspects of road traffic legislation but with certain specified conditions attached.

1.4.3

Team Medic drivers, who fail to comply with the guidance, may face action under the company disciplinary procedures.

1.4.4

Although the law gives exemptions to drivers of Team Medic vehicles who exceed speed limits or contravene traffic light regulations, drivers should be aware that such legal exemptions do not include driving at a speed or in a manner which would amount to driving without due care and attention or dangerously. Therefore, they may still be liable to prosecution, i.e. for dangerous driving or driving without due care and attention if their driving falls below or far below what would be expected of a competent and careful driver.

1.4.4.1

Extracts of law (legal definition) and in how they are applied to Speed, Traffic Lights and Keep Left/Right Sign are detailed below:

1.5 Speed Limits (Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, Section 87)

1.5.1 Legal Extract

No statutory provision imposing a speed limit on motor vehicles shall apply to any vehicle on an occasion when it is being used for Ambulance purposes if the observation of that provision will be likely to hinder the use of that vehicle for the purpose for which it is being used on that occasion.

1.5.2

It is emphasised that **speed will never take precedence over safety**. During training, drivers learn how to drive to an emergency safely using their legal exemptions including that relating to speed restrictions.

1.5.3

Team Medic drivers must maintain this standard of driving during operational roles. They must at all times make reasoned and justifiable decisions to exceed a speed limit and that the speed used is safe and proportionate to all existing circumstances.

1.5.4

In order to ensure a safe and practical response to emergency calls any Team Medic vehicle responding to under emergency response conditions **should not** exceed 20 mph over the posted speed limit. (see table below)

| Posted Speed Limit | Emergency only claiming the exemption against speed |
|--------------------|---|
| 20 mph | 40 mph |
| 30 mph | 50 mph |
| 40 mph | 60 mph |
| 50 mph | 70 mph |
| 70 mph | 90 mph |

Notes:

90 mph represents maximum speed at which staff who are appropriately qualified and trained under the IHCD Ambulance Driving Award or equivalent have been trained to drive with competence.
Staff who are routinely required to drive at higher speeds will need to be trained on an appropriate driving course.

1.5.5

When claiming legal exemptions any Team Medic driver could be required to justify their actions in the legal, civil or disciplinary proceedings.

1.6

The training department will ensure that all drivers who are required to drive vehicles under emergency conditions will be trained to drive to Team Medic speed limits shown above.

1.7 (Traffic Lights (Traffic Sign Regulations and General Directions 2002 Regulation 36(1)(b)).

1.7.1

Legal Extract on any occasion when a vehicle is being used for Ambulance purposes and the observance of a prohibition conveyed by the red signal, including portable traffic

signals would be likely to hinder the use of that vehicle then the prohibition shall not apply. Instead the vehicle shall not proceed in such a manner or at such a time.

1.7.1.1

When negotiating temporary traffic signals at road works the driver must be able to see that the other side of the obstruction is clear before claiming this exemption.

1.7.1.2

As is likely to cause danger to the driver of any other vehicle on the road or as to necessitate the driver of any other such vehicle to change its speed or course in order to avoid an accident.

1.7.1.3

In the case of traffic that is not vehicular e.g. cyclist, pedestrian and or horse as is likely to cause danger to that traffic.

1.7.2

The vehicle speed when passing through areas controlled by red traffic signals must not exceed 15 mph.

1.8 Keep left (right) signs (Traffic Sign Regulations and General Directions 1994 Regulation 15(2))

1.8.1 Legal Extract

On an occasion when a vehicle is being used for Ambulance purpose, if the observance of the sign would be likely to hinder the use of that vehicle then the driver may pass on the wrong side provided that.

1.8.1.1

No danger is likely to be caused to the driver of any other vehicle proceeding on or from another road or on or from another part of the same road.

1.8.1.2

No danger is likely to be caused to non-vehicular traffic e.g. cyclist, pedestrian and or horse proceeding on or from another road or on or from another part of the same road.

1.9 General

1.9.1

On occasions often due to circumstances outside their control Team Medic drivers will find themselves considering contravention of other signs and regulations where no statutory

exemption exists. In each case, the final decision will rely on the professional judgement of the individual concerned.

No circumstances can justify the contravention of any legal requirement.

1.9.2

Whether exempted or not which would endanger other road users or Team Medic employees (e.g. failing to accord precedence at a pedestrian crossing). Team Medic drivers should never drive in the wrong direction on dual carriageways and motorways unless directed to do so by a police officer.

1.10 Auxiliary Warning Equipment

1.10.1

All Team Medic vehicles that engage in an emergency response or transfer must be equipped with both sirens and emergency lights.

1.10.2

When Team Medic drivers use their exemption in relation to contravening red traffic lights then both blue lights and siren must be used. During hours of darkness it may not be appropriate or necessary to use the sirens when negotiating hazards such as traffic lights it is for the driver however to determine their appropriateness and balance their response based on prevailing traffic road and weather conditions.

1.10.3

When Team Medic drivers claim an exemption for speed i.e. driving above either the posted speed limit or of the prevailing traffic then some form of auxiliary warning equipment must be used in all but the most exceptional circumstances and these decisions must be justified.

1.10.4

Response able managers must judge themselves whether to use blue lights and siren are necessary and appropriate dependant on the prevailing road traffic and weather conditions and time of day / night.

Appendix E: Arrangements – Fines and Charges

1 Fines and Charges

1.1

Speeding Fines: All costs associated with speeding fines incurred whilst on duty either in an employee's own vehicle or a Team Medic vehicle, are the responsibility of that employee. Statutory exemption may apply where relevant.

1.2

Parking Fines: All costs associated with parking fines incurred whilst on duty either in an employee's own vehicle or a Team Medic vehicle are the responsibility of that employee. Statutory exemption may apply in relevant circumstances.

1.4

Where fines are received directly, Team Medic reserves the right to recover fines as a deduction from pay where these are not paid by the employee. Employee consent to do this will be required.

1.5

London Low Emission Zone (LEZ) and Congestion Charging: Marked Team Medic vehicles such as ambulance and RRV are exempt from London Congestion Charges. Drivers of all other vehicles are responsible for paying the congestion charges.

Appendix F: The Department of Health letter September 2001

In 1998 the Department of Health engaged the Ambulance Service Association (ASA) to work with the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) to determine and define a set of core competencies that should be applicable to **all** those who drive **any** emergency vehicle under blue light conditions.

This action followed an investigation by the Health Service Commissioner into the tragic death of a member of the public who was hit by an ambulance driving at speed using blue lights and working on contract to the NHS.

The core competencies developed by the DSA have now been accepted and endorsed by the ASA, the Police Service, the Fire Service and Ministry of Defence. The DSA will now approach other blue light users, including private sector ambulance companies to secure their acceptance.

As a next step the ASA is now considering what if any changes need to be made to the national driving course syllabus for NHS Ambulance staff which is already well established.

Following his investigation, the Health Service Commissioner specifically recommended to the Secretary of State for Health that all NHS organisations who employ or engage drivers to drive under emergency conditions must ensure that they have undertaken adequate specialist driver training.

The Department of Health strongly supports the view that all drivers who will operate under blue light conditions must possess the necessary skills. I would ask you therefore to:

- Familiarise yourself with the core competencies which have been developed (copies are available from the ASA website whose address is www.asa.net).
- Have effective arrangements in place which ensure that existing and new drivers employed by your organisation to drive under blue light conditions and drivers working for any contractor employed by your organisation to drive vehicles under emergency blue light conditions have undertaken training which is in line with the new core competencies.
- Make sure that adequate documentation and monitoring arrangements are in place for any such arrangements.

Appendix G: DSA Blue Light Users Working Party

A group consisting of representatives from Police, Fire, Ambulance and Ministry of Defence and led by the Driving Standards Agency (Blue light Users Working Party) have held meetings to establish the core competencies required by those drivers using blue lights and audible warning devices in emergency situations.

As a result, they have now agreed a set of core competencies they consider to be the minimum necessary for any driver to be skilled in before driving a vehicle in such circumstances.

These competencies are in three elements which includes the performance criteria and the required underpinning knowledge as follows:

Element One

The ability to assess the need for an emergency response.

Element Two

The ability to drive the vehicle safely to emergencies.

Element Three

The ability to demonstrate the correct attitude when responding to emergencies.

Element One

Assessment for the need for Emergency Response

Performance criteria

- Ensure the vehicle is suitable and ready for emergency response.
- Assess the need to respond using emergency audible and visual warning devices. Display awareness of responsibilities and legal requirements when dealing upon the need for an emergency response.
- Assess the need for continued response.
- Comply with organisations instructions.

Range statements

1. All locations (urban, town / city, rural)
2. All road conditions (heavy / light traffic, motorway, built-up areas and two-lane roads).
3. All weathers-conditions / visibility (rain, ice, snow, high wind and standing water).
4. Night / Day
5. As a single task or as one of competing priorities.

Underpinning knowledge

- Road Traffic Law.
- Civil Law (duty of care).
- Health and Safety Law.
- Service policy and directives.
- Highway Code.
- Roadcraft.
- Human aspects of Police drivers.
- Legal exemptions.
- Driving (suitable for all emergency response).

Element Two

Driving Vehicles Safely in Response to Emergencies

Performance Criteria

- Warn other road users where appropriate, through effective display and use of audible and visual emergency warning devices.
- Continually assess and adjust driving speed to that appropriate to road traffic conditions, and urgency of the response necessary to ensure safety.
- Position the vehicle for advantage in respect to the position and movement of other road users.
- Show awareness and assess the likely unplanned actions of other road users.
- Show awareness and assess the impact of the use of emergency audible and visual warning devices on others.
- Drive within the vehicle limitations.
- Correct use of legal exemptions where justified and with regard to public safety.
- Correct use of communications equipment when undertaking emergency response driving.
- Drive within the driver's personal limitations.

Range statements

1. All locations (urban, town / city, rural)
2. All road conditions (heavy / light traffic, motorway, built-up areas and two-lane roads).
3. All weathers-conditions / visibility (rain, ice, snow, high wind and standing water).
4. Night / Day
5. As a single task or as one of competing priorities.

Underpinning knowledge

- Road Traffic Law.
- Civil Law (duty of care).
- Health and Safety Law.
- Service policy and directives.
- Highway Code.
- Roadcraft.
- Human aspects of Police drivers.
- Legal exemptions.
- Driving (suitable for all emergency response).

Element Three

Driving Essential Attitudes

Performance Criteria

- Display awareness and understanding of how attitude affects behaviour and performance when driving in emergency response situations.
- Recognise and respond appropriately to fatigue and stress levels which may affect judgement and performance.
- Recognise and show awareness of the need to place safety above all else.
- Recognise how negative attitude and emotions can affect the decision making process.
- Recognise that physiological changes can impair judgement.
- Demonstrate a calm, considered and professional manner when driving.
- Recognise that safety is paramount at all times.

Range statements

6. All locations (urban, town / city, rural)
7. All road conditions (heavy / light traffic, motorway, built-up areas and two-lane roads).
8. All weathers-conditions / visibility (rain, ice, snow, high wind and standing water).
9. Night / Day
10. As a single task or as one of competing priorities.

Underpinning knowledge

- Road Traffic Law.
- Civil Law (duty of care).
- Health and Safety Law.
- Service policy and directives.
- Highway Code.
- Roadcraft.
- Human aspects of Police drivers.
- Legal exemptions.
- Driving (suitable for all emergency response).