



Drivers Handbook



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Foreword

The Company vehicle allocated to you represents a substantial investment by the Company in you and your job. In entrusting this asset to your safekeeping you have the responsibility to drive safely and to look after your vehicle as if it were your own.

You are expected to maintain the vehicle in a first class condition at all times. If it is kept in good order it will be a good advertisement not only for you but also for the Company.

This handbook details the Company's requirements on the use, servicing, running and many other aspects of Company vehicle operation. Please read it carefully and make sure you understand the contents fully. If you have any questions please contact the Manager / Proprietor in the first instance.

The Company has the right to vary any of the procedures and/or rules at any time. Any variation(s) will be notified to you by circular and by means of amended pages in this handbook.

General Introduction and Driver Responsibilities

Manufacturers Handbook

The Manufacturers handbook as supplied with the vehicle should be read carefully even if you have driven a similar model before. Modifications are often introduced which may need slightly different operative procedures.

The handbook should be kept in the vehicle at all times as a point of reference, for technical data; (e.g. tyre pressures) or in the event of an emergency.

Driving Licence

You and all other persons authorised to drive Company vehicles must hold a full current and valid driving licence and any other licence as may be required by law. This must be made available for examination when required by the Company.

You must report to your manager any event (e.g. endorsements) which could invalidate your driving licence. All endorsements should be reported for insurance purposes.

It is your responsibility to renew the licence and it should be carried at all times.

Permission to Drive

You are responsible for the vehicle and for confirming with and carrying out the instructions explained in this handbook. You are also responsible for ensuring that no unauthorised person drives the vehicle whilst it is in your care.

Learner drivers are never allowed to drive Company vehicles.

If an unauthorised person drives your vehicle, neither the vehicle nor the driver, is covered by the Company Motor Insurance. You should note that any person driving an uninsured vehicle is liable to police prosecution, as well as for any damage caused in the event of an accident.

Statutory Regulations

You should be thoroughly conversant with the Highway Code and current laws and regulations, including the Health and Safety at Work Act, which govern the operation of cars, and you should comply with these in all respects. You are strongly advised to familiarise yourself with the Road Traffic Act 1988 and amendments, with particular reference to the provisions on drinking and driving which could result in imprisonment, or that you lose the use of a Company car for some time, and/or pay a heavy fine and insurance charge when your licence is restored.

You must ensure that you are always fit to work, avoid solvent abuse, drinking alcohol, taking illegal substances or failing to follow medical instructions on prescribed drugs, if you are unsure always report to the manager

Driver fatigue is a common cause of accidents. Drivers should ensure that they do not drive excessive hours.

All incidents, which may result in a prosecution under the Road Traffic Act, must be reported to the Company.

Manual Handling

You should ensure that you are familiar with and abide by the Company's policy on manual handling.

Certificate of Motor Insurance

The office holds the Certificate of Motor Insurance for vehicle and copies are available if required.

Passengers

At no time must the seating capacity of the vehicle be exceeded. Ensure that passengers are requested to wear seatbelts at all times and that passengers' belongings, including suitcases and wheelchairs where appropriate, are securely stowed.

Private Use

The vehicle must only be used for normal road travel. The vehicle must not be used for racing, pace making, trials, hill climbing, sprinting or in any competition. It should not be taken outside the UK without prior, written authorisation. We do not allow driving tuition in Company vehicles.

Business Use

Only employees of the Company or authorised individuals are allowed to use the vehicle for business purposes. All drivers must hold a valid driving licence and where applicable a local authority licence.

Personal Car Management

It is your responsibility to ensure that the vehicle allocated to you is kept in good working order at all times.

It will be liable to spot checks periodically by the management. The following sections detail the main elements of your responsibilities in the management of the vehicle.

Daily/Weekly Checks

For your own safety and ensure that the best reliability is obtained from your Company vehicle, get into the habit of making the following checks detailed below.

Daily

- Check Tyres
- Ensure that all lights are operating correctly. It is an offence to drive if your lights are not functioning properly
- Ensure that you have sufficient fuel.
- Clean the windscreen, all windows, mirrors, headlamps and all other light lenses.

Weekly

- Check and correct the tyre pressure and tread wear including the spare wheel. Keep to the pressures recommended in the maker's handbook. It is an offence to have defective tyres.
- Check the engine oil level weekly and/or before setting out on a long journey.
- Check the battery. Keep terminals clean and ensure that all connections are secure.
- Check the radiator water – anti freeze mixture level weekly and/or before setting out on a long journey
- Top up the windscreen washer reservoir at least once a week. Check the action of the windscreen wipers and the condition of the wiper blades at the same time. It is an offence if your windscreen washer is inoperative for any reason.
- Check the clutch fluid and brake fluid reservoirs (where fitted)

General Service and Maintenance

Preventative maintenance through inspection and regular servicing can reduce the defect rate and help improve reliability. It is therefore important that your Company vehicle is properly maintained.

Servicing and Maintenance

Company vehicle must be serviced in line with the manufacturer's recommendations. These are shown on the voucher service book, which accompanies each vehicle. In the event of your vehicle requiring service or maintenance, please contact the Manager / Proprietor to make arrangements. Ensure that the servicing garage stamps the book when the vehicle is serviced. The voucher book must be passed on with the vehicle when it is transferred to another driver or returned to the Company.

Windscreens

The Company has arrangements for the replacement of windscreens. In the event of a windscreen breaking or becoming damaged, please contact the Manager / Proprietor

Tyres

The life of tyres depends to a large extent on the manner in which the vehicle is driven. Excessive speed, braking or acceleration will cause tyres to deteriorate. If they are repeatedly driven against large kerbs or large stones, the walls of the tyres will weaken. Similarly, if tyres are not maintained at the manufacturer's recommended pressures accelerated wear will occur. You are required to pay particular attention to these points.

You should regularly check tyres and if there is doubt, refer to the Manager / Proprietor who will check your tyres and advise replacement as necessary. To have types of tyres which are defective and have insufficient tread constitutes an offence for which the police could prosecute you.

Batteries

In the event of a battery failing, please refer to the Manager / Proprietor

Speedometer

It is an offence to drive the vehicle when the speedometer and/or mileometer are defective. It is your responsibility to ensure that the speedometer is in proper working order at all times. If the mileometer is faulty then this must be advised to the Company immediately as we are under legal obligation to provide an accurate mileage record when disposing of the vehicle.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones **MUST NOT BE USED** whilst driving vehicles or with the vehicle engine running.

There is evidence from the Transport Research Laboratory and RoSPA that using a hand held mobile phone whilst driving can create sufficient distraction whilst driving to create a dangerous situation. The new law introduced in December 2003 makes it a criminal offence to use a hand held phone whilst driving. The Police may prosecute a driver if in their opinion the vehicle is not being driven with due care and attention.

If you need to use the mobile phone this must only be done when the vehicle is parked.

Vehicle Security

New vehicles will have a good level of engine immobilisation fitted as standard. It is becoming very difficult for thieves to “hot wire” a vehicle. This has led to a rise in theft of keys from house burglaries, hook and cane key theft through letterboxes and car jacking. You should be careful where you keep your keys at home. It is common for keys to be left in hallways where they can be easily “fished” through the letterbox. In the unlikely event that a person forces you to hand over the keys to your car do not resist. You are more important than the vehicle. Phone the police and try to give a clear description of the thief.

Night Parking

You should take all sensible precautions regarding parking. At night, garage the vehicle if possible; do not leave property in the vehicle overnight, always lock it when there is no one in the vehicle (even at fuel service stations). Do not park in the more vulnerable positions in car parks.

Audio Equipment, Radios and Data heads

If the equipment is demountable always ensure this is removed and stored safely and securely when the vehicle is unattended.

Where demountable equipment is stolen the driver will normally be charged the replacement cost.

Return/Hand Over of Vehicle

When returning your vehicle you must ensure that it is clean inside and out, serviced up to date and has no significant damage. Any damage or servicing requirements to the vehicle must be reported to the Manager / Proprietor

The cost in rectifying burns, tears, heavily stained areas or excessive wear inside of the vehicle and luggage area will be charged to the driver.

The cost of rectifying body damage, which would not normally be repaired under the terms of the insurance policy, will be charged to the driver.

Insurance Policy and Cover

The Company has arranged Insurance for the vehicle providing cover against:

- Loss
- Theft
- Passenger liability
- Fire
- Third party claims

If Comprehensive cover has been arranged the following will also be included:

- Accident damage
- Vandalism
- Windscreen

However the insurers may decline responsibility if:-

- The car has defective tyres.
- It is not in roadworthy condition.

Also the insurance will be invalidated if the car is (us) driven by a person who is not authorised or not qualified to drive the vehicle.

The insurers will deal with all claims made by third parties, but under no circumstances are you to admit any liability or to make any arrangements for payment to or by a third party. In the event of an accident any accounts, any third party communications, notice of intended prosecution or summons arising from the accident must be passed to the Insurance Department, unanswered, immediately.

Our Insurers have the sole right to conduct any correspondence with the third parties of their representatives. They will deal with any legal proceedings arising out of an accident and, if appropriate, may undertake your defence in any prosecution or represent you at any inquest.

Personal belongings are **not** insured against loss or theft. You are recommended to take out separate or additional cover when carrying more than usual personal belongings, for example when going on holiday. In your own interest please follow these procedures:-

- Where possible do not leave any items in unattended vehicles.
- If items must be left in the vehicles they should be securely locked in the boot of the car.
- Property should not be left in the vehicle overnight.

Individual Insurance Excess

When the insurance company impose an extra claim excess and/or additional premium on an individual driver because of their record, (usually for reasons of a drink-driving conviction and licence loss), that extra excess amount may be charged by the Company to the driver concerned, and arrangements can be made for the amount to be paid monthly.

Disciplinary action will be taken against an employee convicted of a drink driving offence whilst on Company business.

Accidents

To comply with the requirements of the Motor Insurance Policy it is essential that the accident report procedure described in this brochure are strictly observed in any of the following events:

- Any accidental or malicious damage to the car.
- Any actual or attempted theft of or from the car.
- Fire
- Accidents of any kind (Whether or not involving any third party vehicle or property including any accident where known damage is caused to the Company vehicle.

Action must be taken to protect you, the Company and our Insurers following an accident. Drivers involved in road accidents must arrange to contact ...Name... immediately. If the vehicle is un-driveable, the driver should arrange to have it removed to a local garage but must not give authority for repairs without permission of the management.

Disciplinary action, leading to the withdrawal of the vehicle, will be taken against employees with a bad "own fault" accident record.

If, because of the late supply or inaccurate nature of information given of an accident the Company is involved in additional costs, the employee responsible will be subject to disciplinary action.

Accident Report Procedure

All Damage resulting from accidents, theft, fire, vandalism etc, however minor, involving a Company vehicle must be reported to the management immediately after the event. The following action must be taken at the scene of the accident and subsequently:

- Obtain names, addresses and if possible, motor Insurance details from each third party driver involved in the accident. Make a note of the make, description, e.g. van, car or bus, and registration details of every vehicle involved. If any vehicle is, or appears to be, owned by a company or business, obtain the name and address of the owner.
- Give your name and address; Company name and address to all third parties, stating that the necessary Insurance details will be provided.

- At no stage admit liability. Make no comment or statement on the accident (except to a police officer)
- Notify the police if personal injury has been sustained by anyone in the accident; or if the third party did not stop or drove off before giving you personal details; and in cases of theft.
- Obtain names and addresses of as many independent witnesses as possible.
- Measure (pace out) the position of vehicles on the road and take pictures of the scene if possible.
- Do not remove your vehicle under its own power if this could cause further damage. Contact the Company who will make arrangements for the removal of the vehicle.

No person other than a member of the management is authorised to give you any instructions concerning motor insurance claims or related expenditure.

Accidents – Miscellaneous

The Company wishes to return vehicles to you with all repairs completed as quickly as possible. Any delay in reporting an accident involving your vehicle can delay repairs. Minor repairs that affect roadworthiness e.g. broken headlamp, bulb, may be carried out immediately but must still be reported.

If a third party who was involved in the accident admits liability and is willing to sign a statement to that effect, it will obviously assist our Insurers to make and appropriate claim, but such a statement must be given entirely voluntarily.

Do not offer a similar statement yourself to any third party.

Accidents involving lampposts, telegraph poles, bollards, manhole covers, road signs or other public property must be reported. They must also be reported to the police either at the scene of the accident or the nearest police station.

Accidents involving private fences walls, gateposts etc, must be reported. Whenever possible the owner or occupier of the property should be notified. If they are not available notify the accident to the police. This action applies to accidents involving unattended third party vehicles. Remember that if you fail to stop after an accident or fail to report to the other party or to the police you may be prosecuted.

Accidents involving animals must be reported to the police.

Motoring/Parking Offences

Any traffic offence, endorsements, imposition of penalty points etc. must be reported to the management who will review the insurance implications. Failure to notify the management may well invalidate your insurance.

You are personally responsible for any fines resulting in the above. If you are convicted of a driving offence and consequently lose your driving licence it may mean your suspension and subsequent loss of employment, or redeployment to another appointment within the Company at the Company's discretion.

Company drivers are required to pay any fixed penalty, such as for a parking offence, within the prescribed time; if you fail to do so the Company is held accountable. In addition, any such charges will be deducted from your salary together with an administration charge; this administration charge will be reviewed annually. Any charge from the leasing company will be similarly deducted from your salary. You are reminded that administration charges can be avoided by prompt payment of fixed penalties, as required by law.

Useful Hints

- Use cold water to clean bodywork (hot water leaves streaks).
- Do not use metal polish on chrome work.
- Carry a torch in case of breakdown after dark.
- Carry a spare fan belt in your vehicle. Carry a small piece of flat wood to jack the car on soft ground.
- Ensure antifreeze is of correct strength.
- Give wiper blades an occasional wipe with Methylated spirit.
- Carry a Warning Triangle.
- Do not use oily rags on windscreen.
- Keep small change handy for telephone calls.
- Keep this handbook in your glove compartment at all times.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

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