



## Yorkshire Ambulance Service

### Driving at Work Guidance

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## Document Control Information

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V1.0	Nov 2014	Gary Walden/ Roy Dearnley	A	Approved TMG November 2014
V1.1	Sept 2017		A	Policy current practice. Extension granted at Sept 17 TMG to December 17. Review currently underway.
A = Approved D = Draft				
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Associated Documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Driving at Work Policy</li> <li>▪ Carbon Management Plan</li> <li>▪ Code of Conduct</li> <li>▪ Disciplinary Policy and Procedure</li> <li>▪ Risk Management Procedures</li> <li>▪ Pre and Post Employment Checks Policy</li> <li>▪ Environmental Policy</li> <li>▪ Excess Mileage, Travel Time and Accommodation Policy</li> <li>▪ Medical Standards for Fitness to Drive Policy</li> <li>▪ Guidance for Managers – Driving Referrals</li> </ul>				

## **Background**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.0.1 The very nature of an emergency service leads the public to associate ambulance employees and volunteers with a high standard of driving skill and road behaviour.

### **2.0 Purpose**

- 2.0.1 The purpose of this document is to draw attention to certain aspects of driving and vehicle care which will result in reducing accidents and lessen risk to patients, other road users and Trust personnel.

### **3.0 Process**

- 3.0.1 All vehicles being used for Trust business, whether they are Trust owned, leased or privately owned, must be suitable for the task, be maintained, have the relevant road tax license and be appropriately insured.

### **4.0 Trust Vehicles**

- 4.0.1 The legal responsibility for ensuring that all Trust vehicles are maintained and serviced to an adequate level lies with the Trust. The driver has a legal responsibility to ensure that the vehicle they have been allocated is road worthy and safe to use (e.g. condition of tyres, clear windscreen, etc.).

- 4.0.2 All drivers of lease vehicles should have a written management plan in place. The management plan must take into account the type, usage and statutory imposed standards of the vehicle. All management plans should include details on the following:-

- MOT Tests
- Road Tax
- Servicing and other formal safety checks
- Type and frequency of checks/safety examinations

#### **4.1 Employees and volunteers who drive on Trust Business**

- 4.1.1 Employees and volunteers are legally responsible, in the same way as any other driver, for ensuring that the vehicle being used is in a roadworthy condition. To comply with this obligation the driver of any Trust vehicle (leased or owned) or privately owned vehicle being used for Trust business must check the following prior to use:

- 1) **Tyres** – conduct a visual check of each tyre and report any excessive / uneven wear, cuts, lumps, bulges, tread separation and/or sidewall cracking.
- 2) **Exterior Lights** - All exterior lights, indicators, reflectors and number plate lights must be working, clean and free from missing cases, cracks or damage.
- 3) **Windscreens and windows** – must be clean and free from obstructions/damage.

- 4.1.2 Line Managers are to ensure that all employees are given reasonable time to fulfil these checks prior to using any Trust vehicle (leased or owned), if due to operational demand this is not possible the driver must ensure that they inform the their relevant control

rooms e.g. EOC or PTS Communications so that it is noted on the log and carry out the check at the earliest opportunity.

4.1.3 If time permits the following should also be checked by the driver:

- 1) **Oil Level** - Do this when the engine is cold as a false reading may be given if checking after the engine has been running
- 2) **Coolant Level** – Check **ONLY** when/if the engine is cold
- 3) **Interior Dash Board Lights** - Check that all dashboard warning lights operate correctly. Refer to the vehicle manual to familiarise yourself with the meaning of each. If any lights are illuminated, contact the Fleet Helpline immediately.
- 4) **Fuel Level** - Maintain at least half a tank of fuel.
- 5) **Wiper Blades** - Check both front and rear wiper blades (if present) for wear, damage or splitting. If the blades smear on the windscreen try wiping them with a detergent such as washing-up liquid or mild acid such as vinegar.
- 6) **Windscreen Washer Level** - Check windscreen washer liquid levels as it can be very dangerous to run out of spray when you need them most. Also ensure that the washer nozzles are adjusted correctly so that the washer liquid sprays accurately onto the vehicle windscreen.

4.1.4 All damage to a Trust vehicle must immediately be reported to a Line Manager, failure to do so could result in the last recorded driver being held responsible.

4.1.5 Should a Trust vehicle develop a fault and/or defect at any time the driver must immediately contact the Fleet Operational Support Centre on 0845 12 12 12 9. This should be done for **ALL** vehicle faults and/or defects regardless of whether you deem the vehicle to be VOR or not.

4.1.6 All users of Trust vehicles (leased or owned), excluding managers lease cars, should ensure they are familiar with and understand the Trusts Guidelines for Action in the Event of a Vehicle Defect (Appendix 1.)

4.1.7 Vehicles fitted with AdBlue system will require topping up every 3000 miles (depended on driving styles). During any visit to a Fleet Department workshop the AdBlue system will be checked and topped up, however due to driving styles/mileage there may be a requirement for additional top ups. A yellow AdBlue low warning light may appear on the dash board when the AdBlue system falls below a certain level. In this event, report it to the Fleet Helpdesk; please note the vehicle is not VOR. In the event of the red AdBlue warning light appearing the vehicle must be returned to the nearest fleet workshop and the vehicle VOR'd until the issue has been rectified.

4.1.8 All Trust employees, when driving a Trust vehicle (owned or leased), should take extra care when re-fuelling. Any incidents of misfueling must be reported immediately to the Fleet Department, the driver must also report the incident to the Datix 24/7 helpline.

4.1.9 Employees who are provided with a lease car are to ensure that their vehicles are serviced at the manufacturers recommended intervals. Any defects with the vehicle and/or tyres should be directed at the Leasing company in the first instance.

4.1.10 All Trust employees, when driving a Trust vehicle (owned or leased), are liable for any fixed penalty notices and parking fines they incur.

4.1.11 If required to carry a load this should be carried as safely and securely as possible, regard should be given to:

- Any hazard presented by the load – shifting, hot / cold, leakage etc.
- Any specific signage required by relevant regulations (Hazardous Materials, flammable liquids, compressed gasses etc.)
- Any training required, to load / unload the load i.e. Manual Handling
- Any restrictions regarding the weight of the load for the vehicle used
- Securing of the load whilst in transit.
- Any advance warning to relevant authorities that the load is to be moved including – Route – content – time of travel – size of load (high, wide etc.)
- Any specific license or signage to carry or required by the driver to transport the load

All requirements should be confirmed prior to moving the load if unsure of any aspect of the move, the driver should seek advice from their manager / supervisor.

## **4.2 Code of Practice for Emergency Driving & Speed**

- 4.2.1 Emergency vehicle response driving, within the Trust, is a regular occurrence for all clinical front line staff and managers in liveried vehicles fitted with an audible and visual warning system. Experience, competence and confidence are the necessary qualities to ensure the safety of individuals and the general public whilst undertaking such high risk driving tasks.
- 4.2.2 When responding to an emergency the driver should attempt to make good progress using their experience and professional judgement to assess road, traffic and weather conditions at all times, claiming exemptions (Appendix 2) where appropriate, with the aim of producing a safe but progressive drive. There is no automatic right to claim an exemption from Road Traffic Legislation, and the driver must be able to claim or demonstrate a reasonable approach by justifying the need for the exemption, if required to do so by the Police or member of the Service.

## **4.3 Reversing**

- 4.3.1 Persons have been injured and vehicles have been damaged during reversing. By following a few simple rules and guidance from Section 8 of the UK Ambulance Services Emergency Response Driver's this type of incident can be avoided.
- 4.3.2 **Double-crewed vehicles** - Prior to reversing, the driver and attendant/passenger must agree a safe path for the vehicle to take. The attendant/passenger is to act as a guide and the vehicle is not to be reversed until he/she has checked that the area, into which the vehicle is to travel, is clear. The attendant/passenger is to stand in a position from where they can be best seen and heard by the driver in the nearside mirror. Verbal instructions alone are inadequate as they may be drowned by the vehicle engine or other noise. When the attendant's/passenger's view is restricted from the front or side of the vehicle, he/she should take up a position towards the rear of the vehicle, eye contact must be maintained with the driver at all times. Where the attendant is working with a patient and cannot assist the driver, the driver should continue single manned and with extreme caution.
- 4.3.3 **Single-crewed vehicles** - The driver should take the opportunity to fully assess the space to be reversed into when approaching/passing it. The vehicle is not to be reversed until the driver is satisfied that the way is clear and sufficient space exists for the manoeuvre to be completed safely. Even then, particular care is to be taken in case a person approaches unseen behind the vehicle. On ambulance stations and hospital premises, other members of Ambulance Trust staff are often available to assist and there should be no hesitation in calling on them, or other responsible persons whilst the manoeuvre is completed.

- 4.3.4 Any driver, who does not obtain assistance when they could reasonably do so, will be held responsible for any subsequent incident which occurs and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 4.3.5 It should be remembered that all reversing manoeuvres must be carried out at very low speeds and, where fitted, the reversing alarms should be used. On a majority of road surfaces, tick-over is sufficient to carry out most manoeuvres allowing the right foot to cover the brake.

#### **4.4 Wearing of seat belts**

- 4.4.1 Drivers and all passengers being conveyed in Trust vehicles are required to wear seatbelts and/or other appropriate restraints for the duration of any journey. All seatbelts and/or other appropriate restraints **must** be fitted and worn correctly i.e. both lap and diagonal belts, to ensure that they offer the maximum protection at all times. The only time that the Trust will convey a passenger without a seatbelt and/or suitable restraint is if that passenger is in possession of a valid medical exemption certificate which has been verified by the Trust.
- 4.4.2 Occasions where a seat belt does not legally require to be worn are very rare and would only be from the following list:
- 1) If you are driving a vehicle and are carrying out a manoeuvre which includes reversing.
  - 2) If you have a valid medical exemption certificate verified by the Trust.
  - 3) If your seat belt has become defective on your journey and you are on route to have it repaired.
  - 4) If you are attending to a patient and to do so would hinder your ability to care for that patient.
- 4.4.3 It is advised that any driver or passenger who is in the later stages of pregnancy ensures they are at least 25cm's (10 inches) from the steering wheel or passenger dashboard, moving the seat back as far as they comfortably can. If the steering wheel tilts it should be pointed towards the breast bone, not the abdomen or head. The lap part of the seat belt should be positioned low on the abdomen below the foetus and cross chest piece worn normally.
- 4.4.4 The responsibility for wearing a seat belt rests with each individual if over the age of 14. It is the drivers' legal responsibility to ensure that any child between the age of 12 and 13 or over 1.35 meters tall wears a seat belt, and any child under that age or height wears the appropriate child restraint. Failure to do so could result in a prosecution of the driver. Care should be taken when alighting from a vehicle that the seat belt has returned and is not causing an obstruction or tripping hazard.
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#### **4.5 Smoking**

- 4.5.1 It is **FORBIDDEN** to smoke inside any Trust vehicle (leased or owned) or within close vicinity. It does not portray a professional image to the Public and there is a serious risk of explosion due to the close proximity of medical gases.

#### **5.0 Insurance**

- 5.0.1 The Fleet Department are responsible for ensuring that all Trust vehicles have adequate insurance cover when they are in use. The drivers of private vehicles must ensure that the car is insured for use at work. It is the responsibility of the Line Manager to ensure

that no one is required to use their own vehicle if they do not have adequate insurance cover. Lease car holders are responsible for ensuring that their vehicles are driven within the terms of the insurance scheme.

- 5.0.2 Lease car users can obtain a copy of the Trusts Non-Operational Motor Insurance policy by contacting the Fleet Department as and when required.

## **6.0 Driver Licence Verification**

- 6.0.1 Under current legislation (Section 87 (2) Road Traffic Act 1988), guidelines by the Health and Safety Executive and in accordance with the Trusts' Pre & Post Employment Checks Policy the Trust has an obligation to ensure that only holders of valid driving licences are permitted to drive on behalf of the Trust. All Trust employees and volunteers, driving either a Trust vehicle (owned or leased) or their own vehicle on Trust business, are required to complete a driving licence consent form to authorise the Trust's appointed body to conduct at least, an annual driving licence check with the DVLA (more frequently for drivers considered high risk). The consent form will need to be renewed every three years. It is the responsibility of individual drivers to inform their line managers immediately if for any reason they have their licence removed.
- 6.0.2 Line managers must ensure that anyone required to drive on Trust business holds the correct category, on their Full UK driving licence, and the necessary experience to do so i.e. Category B - can drive vehicles up to 3,500kg Maximum Authorised Mass (MAM) with up to 8 passenger seats (with a trailer up to 750kg). The holder can also tow heavier trailers if the total weight of vehicle and trailer isn't more than 3,500kg.

## **7.0 Reporting Incidents involving Trust Vehicles**

- 7.0.1 A vehicle incident is defined as any incident involving a motor vehicle owned or leased by the Trust and being driven by a Trust employee or an authorised user and/or volunteer, or that the presence of the Trust vehicle could be considered as a contributory factor in the incident. All drivers must ensure that, if they are involved in a Road Traffic Collision (RTC), they comply with the procedures as stated in the Highway Code rules 286 and 287, Road Traffic Act 1988, Section 170 by following the guidance detailed in Appendix 3.
- 7.0.2 All drivers involved in a vehicle related incident, whilst driving a Trust vehicle, must complete a Scene of Incident Report (TAR2) form at the time of the incident. The driver **must** report the incident via the Datix Hotline at the earliest opportunity or at the end of their shift, latest.
- 7.0.3 The Line Manager must ensure that the Trust driver complete a Post Incident Questionnaire (Appendix 4) as part of their investigation and attach this to the datix report prior to submitting the investigation for Final Approval.
- 7.0.4 A member of staff finding damage to a Trust vehicle during a before use safety check, that has not been previously reported, must immediately inform their Line Manager and complete a Found on Inspection Datix report.
- 7.0.5 Whenever previously unreported damage to a Trust vehicle is found this is to be investigated by the Line Manager.
- 7.0.6 Following any vehicle related incident which has resulted either injury to any person involved and/or significant damage to a Trust vehicle the Trust driver should be removed from driving duties until the successful completion of a driving assessment.

Line Managers should refer to Guidance for Managers – Guidance on when to stand down a member of staff from driving duties following an accident for more information.

- 7.0.7 Any employee proven to have been responsible for 3 or more vehicle related incidents within a rolling 12 month period, whilst driving on Trust business, will be required to undertake a driving assessment. Line Managers should refer to Guidance for Managers – Driving Referrals when arranging these.

## **8.0 Use of Mobile Phones in Vehicles**

- 8.0.1 Driving requires your full concentration at all times. Trying to do something else while driving will distract you, slow your reactions and make the possibility of a collision more likely.
- 8.0.2 Under sections 2 & 3 of the Road Traffic Act it is illegal to use a mobile phone a vehicle, at any time, when the engine is running. This includes when stationary at traffic lights or when parked on or adjacent to roads. The only exception to this rule is if your life is in danger and you need to contact the emergency services on 999 and to stop would exacerbate the situation.
- 8.0.3 Although you can legally use hands-free phones, sat navs and 2-way radios whilst you're driving, if the police think you're distracted and not in control of your vehicle you could still get stopped and penalised, therefore the Trust advocates that any use of these devices be kept to an absolute minimum and that the driver must stop in a safe place to continue the conversation if a hands free device is to be used for an extended period of time.
- 8.0.4 The use of a Smart Phone for reading and responding to emails or texts is strictly prohibited whilst the vehicles engine is switched on and you are in the drivers' seat.

## **9.0 Drivers Health**

- 9.0.1 The safety of any driver is affected by eyesight defects and all drivers have a legal obligation to satisfy the eyesight requirements in the Highway Code.
- 9.0.2 It is the duty of any member of staff or volunteer required to drive on Trust business to inform their Line Manager if they are suffering from any illness or health condition which impairs their ability to drive or if they are required to take medicine that might affect their judgement.
- 9.0.3 For all DVLA Group 2 drivers who continue to work beyond the age of 65 years an annual health assessment including eyesight check will be performed.
- 9.0.4 No member of staff should drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- 9.0.5 If a Line Manager has concerns about an employee's fitness to drive they should refer to the Trusts Medical Standards for Fitness to Drive Policy for guidance.

## **10.0 Working Day Duration when Travelling Long Distances**

- 10.0.1 Working long hours which include driving long distances can increase the possibility of accidents. This is especially so in poor driving conditions such as those caused by adverse weather. If an employee is required to attend a course and the travel time is deemed excessive, from the employees' base location, accommodation may be offered,



employees should refer to the Trusts Excess Mileage, Travel Time and Accommodation/Subsistence Policy for further guidance.

- 10.0.2 When driving long distances all drivers should ensure they have sufficient fuel to complete the journey. Refuelling with patients on board is to be avoided, however, in extreme circumstances this should be considered preferable to swapping the patient to another vehicle.
- 10.0.3 All drivers are to ensure that they plan any long journey in advance and allow sufficient time to take regular breaks when driving continuously for long periods.

## Appendix 1 - GUIDELINES FOR ACTION IN THE EVENT OF VEHICLE DEFECTS

CHECK LIST	REPORTABLE DEFECTS	VOR
<b>Oil Leaks</b>	Dripping giving rise to a patch in excess of 65mm in 5 minutes	Continuous flow, imminent likelihood of fire due to oil contamination. Oil warning light continuously illuminated
<b>Fuel Leaks</b>	Any diesel leak, any strong smell of petrol. Filler cap defective. If possible move vehicle to a well-ventilated area, preferably outside premises	Continuous or a leak constituting a fire risk. Missing filler cap Any petrol leak
<b>Battery</b>	Leaks, insecure, loose terminals	Detachment imminent
<b>Brakes</b>	Performance below normal expectations. Pedal rubbers worn smooth. Sticking/binding brakes. Excess travel	<b>Footbrake</b> – Pedal creeps to floor or is excessively spongy. Insufficient reserve travel. Fluid below minimum level in reservoir. Deviation to one side or grabbing/juddering affecting directional control. <b>Handbrake</b> – Excessive side play. Difficult to operate. Insufficient reserve travel. Inadvertently disengages. Failure to release
<b>Exhaust</b>	Insecure, leaking, noisy	Fumes entering vehicle. Detachment imminent
<b>Smoke Emission</b>	Continuous haze	Sufficient to obscure vision or likely to cause danger to others
<b>Wheels</b>	Kerbing damage. Steering wheel out of alignment	Badly distorted/damaged. Stud holes elongated/damaged. Nuts missing or loose. Rust emitting from nuts.
<b>Doors &amp; Exits</b>	Holding/retaining device defective. Difficulty in opening and closing. Steps stiff/damaged. Retaining device faulty	Jammed shut. Likely to fly open inadvertently. Could cause injury to users. Could impede driver in an emergency
<b>Tyres</b>	Shoulder Wear. Cuts. Sidewall scuffing. Tyre depth 3mm or less (refer to YAS tyre policy)	Bulging caused by separation or partial failure of its structure. Body cords damaged/exposed. Under inflated or tread worn below legal limit. Immediate action at 2 mm
<b>Mirrors</b>	Faulty passenger/interior mirror	Drivers view to rear is inadequate due to obligatory drivers mirror missing, insecure, damaged
<b>Wipers</b>	Worn blades. Juddering. Insecure	Missing/inoperative such as to impair drivers view (subject to prevailing weather)
<b>Washers</b>	Partially blocked. Misaligned washer jets	Missing/inoperative such as to impair drivers view (subject to prevailing weather)

<b>Horn</b>	Inoperable. Low noise	No means of audible warning of approach
<b>Glass</b>	Scratches, cracks, holes. Window inoperative/stiff	Drivers view seriously impaired by damage. Windows jammed open
<b>Reflectors</b>	Obligatory reflectors deteriorated. Obscured/insecure	Detachment imminent
<b>Body Exterior</b>	Panel damage, missing, insecure, corroded	Items likely to fall off or cause injury

<b>CHECK LIST</b>	<b>REPORTABLE DEFECTS</b>	<b>VOR</b>
<b>Steering</b>	Excessive lift or side movement. Stiff steering. Noisy/knocking operation. Fluid leaks	Abnormal lift or side play indicating failed components. Power steering inoperative. Excessive free play in straight ahead position that could impair drivers control of vehicle. Failure or detachment imminent. Continuous oil leak
<b>Heating and Ventilation</b>	Performance below normal expectations	Fumes entering saloon. Heating failed completely (subject to prevailing weather)
<b>Lights</b>	Inoperative/damaged lamps. Flickers. Intermittent operation.	Obligatory lamps inoperative, dim, missing, obscured or insecure when use of lights is compulsory (an immediate prohibition will normally only be appropriate for such defects in conditions of seriously reduced visibility or at night)  NOTE: Obligatory lamps i.e. front and rear side lamps, rear fog, headlamps, stop lamps
<b>Body Interior</b>	Side panel/floor covering/roof ventilators damaged, missing, protruding, and insecure. Seats belts inoperative/defective. Seats insecure/damaged. Grab rails insecure/damaged	Obligatory front seat belts inoperative. Any item that could injure users or affect drivers safety or control of vehicle or items likely to endanger patients
<b>Indicators</b>	Warning light inoperative. Lamps inoperative, damaged, obscured or insecure. Hazard lights inoperative	Inability of driver to signal intention to change direction by whatever means. Detachment imminent
<b>Transmission</b>	Difficulty selecting gears. Jumping out of gear. Clutch adjustment	Clutch slipping. Knocking noise/vibration indicating failure imminent
<b>Suspension</b>	Knocking noises. Air suspension leaking, failure to dump	Detachment/failure imminent affecting control of vehicle
<b>Engine</b>	Water leaks. Performance below normal expectations	Overheating, knocking, misfiring, likely to lead to early breakdown or engine failure

## Appendix 2:

### EXEMPTIONS

**Remember – You are in a privileged position when driving to or from emergencies, and assume a role of enormous responsibility. Never abuse the exemption. The fact that you may be responding to an emergency does not mean that there is an automatic right to claim an exemption. You, the driver, MUST always be able to justify the need for the exemption.**

### EXEMPTIONS

The following exemptions are the **only** exemptions applicable to YAS NHS Trust ambulance drivers, where justified:

- Stopping on Clearways.
- Parking within the 'zig-zags' of a Pedestrian Crossing.
- Parking in areas controlled by Double White/Yellow lines.
- Leaving the engine running whilst parked
- Parking on the Offside of the road at night.
- Parking on footway/verge/central reservation of a motorway or dual carriageway
- Exceeding statutory speed limits.
- Treating a Red traffic light as Give Way.
- Using audible warnings at night.
- Observing Keep Left/Right signs.
- Motorway regulations (where you need to do so to avoid or prevent an accident, or to obtain or give help required at an accident or emergency).
- Entering a Bus Lane/Street.
- Entering a pedestrian precinct.

### NON-EXEMPTIONS

There are no exemptions for the driver of an ambulance, even when responding to an emergency call from the following list:

- Dangerous driving.
- Careless driving.
- Failing to stop if involved in a Road Traffic Collision.
- Dangerous Parking.
- Driving without a seat belt subject to those exemptions available to other motorists and further constraints under individual Service policies e.g. it is unlikely that anyone holding an indefinite medical exemption is fit to drive ambulance vehicles.
- Failing to obey traffic lights controlling a Railway Level Crossing or Fire Station.
- Crossing or straddling a solid white line nearest to you down the middle of the road (other than those listed in the Highway Code or if you pass a maintenance vehicle, a pedal cyclist or a horse being ridden all of which must be travelling at 10mph or less.
- Failing to obey a 'No Entry' sign (unless instructed to by a Police Officer or Traffic Warden in uniform).
- Failing to obey a 'One-Way' sign.
- Failing to obey a 'Stop' or 'Give Way' sign.

The driver should, wherever possible, attempt to make good progress, claiming exemptions where appropriate and justified, using their experience and professional judgement to assess road, traffic and weather conditions at all times, with the aim of producing a safe but progressive drive.

The driver can claim a Legal Exemption for using audible warnings during the hours of 23.30 – 07.00hrs. Although there are circumstances where the audible devices can be switched off,

there has to be good justification of this and there needs to be awareness that if an accident occurs and it was proved that the driver did not have the audible devices switched on, there is the likelihood of prosecution. The advice in these circumstances is “if in doubt, switch the audible devices on, especially within urban areas to give advance warning of your presence to other road users and pedestrians.

Visual warning lights must be used when claiming exemptions, and with audible warnings where justified.

The continuous use of audible warnings may be inappropriate in certain situations and not using them would be justified in areas of unfenced animals, pedestrian precincts and in stationary traffic (this list is not exhaustive).

### **Use of Audible and Visual Warning Devices.**

When deployed on an emergency detail, the assigned response will proceed to the incident using visual warning devices (blue warning lights and flashing headlights, although the latter should not be used at night) at all times; audible warning devices **must** be used with due regard to hazards, prevailing road and traffic conditions.

Whilst claiming recognised legal exemptions to Road Traffic Legislations, i.e. Speed Limits, keep left / right signs and Red traffic lights, staff **must** ensure that audible and visual warning devices are utilised appropriately, with care and consideration for other road users, and that the driver does nothing that could be classed as careless or dangerous driving.

### **Traffic Signals**

When approaching a red traffic signal it **must** be treated as a ‘STOP’ or ‘GIVE WAY’ sign and no attempt should be made to proceed unless the driver is sure the way is clear.

On the approach to a red traffic signal both visual and audible warning devices **must** be used, it must be noted that these devices are to alert other road users of your presence and do not give any ‘right of way’ to the Ambulance vehicle.

Only when the driver is absolutely certain that they have been observed by all the other road users and it is safe to proceed can they enter the junction.

Proceed through the junction with extreme caution and at a speed appropriate to the prevailing road, traffic and weather conditions. Consider speed as being “at walking pace” for most situations.

In order to comply with the above guidance, the drivers approaching speed to any red traffic signal **must** be reduced accordingly.

### **Temporary traffic signals**

This form of traffic signal has exactly the same legal standing as fixed traffic signals. The driver must be absolutely certain that they are able to negotiate the hazard without causing danger to other road users (can they see the other side of the hazard?). Whilst operatives at roadwork’s may be signalling you through, it is the driver who holds the responsibility and must be satisfied it is safe to proceed.

### **Pedestrian crossings**

Owing to the nature and use of these crossings, extreme caution must be exercised at all times on the approach and negotiation of these crossings. The driver must not proceed until they are completely satisfied that any pedestrians have observed their approach and they have elicited the appropriate response, enabling them to negotiate the hazard safely.

### **Emergency Warning Devices fitted to YAS Trust vehicle (leased or owned)**

Before such cars are fitted with blue lights and audible warning devices the individual must have successfully completed an IHCD Emergency Driving Programme (D1 and D2) the driver must make themselves available for any update or refresher training as the Trust sees fit. Any staff not meeting this criterion must not drive vehicles and use warning devices under emergency conditions at any time.

Trust vehicles engaged on normal non-emergency duties must, at all times, comply with all legislation and the Highway Code.

The use of blue lights and audible warning devices is intended to assist managers to make safe progress when responding to emergency calls and for protecting the scene in hazardous situations when safe to do so.

### **Permanently mounted roof-rail mounted LED units**

Due to the development of these units and their semi-permanent fixings to the vehicles they are permitted to remain on the vehicles providing they are displaying a white outer lens.

### **Deployment of removable roof mounted blue light units**

If a manager is on call, or is the duty officer, it is acceptable for the blue lights to remain in place on the vehicle. They must be removed at all other times; they must also not be left on the vehicle if a family member or other named driver is using the vehicle.

Remember if left on display, these lights may attract car thieves or break-ins. In the wrong hands, these lights can, and have been used in serious crimes and could be a target for terrorists. All reasonable precautions must be made by the driver to ensure the safety of the emergency equipment including, for example parking the vehicle in prominent and well-populated positions in car parks whenever possible and not secluded areas. **Criminals will normally choose the easiest target - don't make your vehicle an easy target.**

When using the emergency blue light it should be mounted in the centre of the car roof, preferably between the rear and front windscreens, enabling greater visibility to other road users.

If available, ensure your car is displaying YAS signs throughout the period in which magnetic emergency blue lights are in use. The police may stop any unmarked vehicle not displaying identification, even if that vehicle is proceeding to an emergency. However if the situation does arise the driver must comply immediately with the Police Officers instructions or reasonable requests.

When not on duty these lights must always be stored, preferably in the car boot, never on the rear parcel shelf. Left on rear parcel shelves they become very dangerous projectiles in the event of sudden braking or incidents.

### **Speed Limits**

A vehicle being used for emergency response purposes may exceed any statutory speed limit (those governing roads and vehicles) if observance of the limit would hinder the use of the vehicle for its official purpose on that occasion. The exemption could be claimed when travelling to an emergency call but on the journey to hospital it would not normally be relevant unless the patient's condition justifies the exemption. The need for haste normally ends with the arrival at the incident.

The emergency vehicle should always be driven at a speed compatible with the patient's condition. The attendant dealing with the patient is best to provide information to the driver on best transit arrangements.

**Safety must always be the over-riding priority of the driver and the safest speed for the existing circumstances must be applied at all times. The vehicle must be driven at a speed whereby the driver can accurately assess, plan and deal with all existing and developing hazards safely.**

### **Speed limits (Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, Section 87)**

*'No statutory provision imposing a speed limit on motor vehicles shall apply to any vehicle on an occasion when it is being used for Fire Brigade, Ambulance or Police purposes if the observance 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.'*

Whilst exemption from statutory speed limits exist when, engaged on emergency response driving and authorised driver training courses, there still remains an overriding statutory requirement for the driver, and in the case of driving courses the Instructor, to maintain safety margins. The exemption afforded the Ambulance Service does not allow staff to drive at a speed or in a manner which would amount to driving dangerously or without due care and attention.

The various Police Authorities covering YAS NHS Trust are within their rights, under certain circumstances, to view excessive use of speed as dangerous driving and allocate the appropriate proceedings against the driver.

**The driver must be able to justify the speed and manner in which they chose to drive the vehicle at all times, possibly in a court of law.**

When responding to an emergency Trust staff are encouraged to remain within the speeds listed below and are dependent the drivers dynamic risk assessment at the time; taking into consideration all other road users, traffic, weather and visibility.

YAS NHS Trust staff are advised to comply with the following limits whilst driving front line ambulances under emergency conditions:

<b>Statutory Speed Limit</b>	<b>YAS NHS Trust Speed Limit</b>
<b>20mph</b>	<b>Up to 30mph</b>
<b>30mph</b>	<b>Up to 50mph</b>
<b>40mph</b>	<b>Up to 60mph</b>
<b>50mph</b>	<b>Up to 70mph</b>
<b>60mph</b>	<b>Up to 80mph</b>
<b>70mph</b>	<b>Up to 100mph</b>

YAS NHS Trust staff are advised to comply with the following absolute limits whilst driving Rapid Response Vehicles under emergency conditions:

<b>Statutory speed limit</b>	<b>YAS limit</b>
<b>20mph</b>	<b>Up to 30mph</b>
<b>30mph</b>	<b>Up to 50mph</b>
<b>40mph</b>	<b>Up to 60mph</b>
<b>50mph</b>	<b>Up to 70mph</b>
<b>60mph</b>	<b>Up to 90mph</b>
<b>70mph</b>	<b>Up to 110mph</b>

### **Non – Emergency Driving - Patient Transport Service (and all other non-emergency driver trained staff)**

YAS NHS Trust does not permit non-emergency personnel the right to claim the Road Traffic Regulations exemptions afforded to Emergency vehicles other than those 'stopping' or 'parking' exemptions listed in the IHCD Ambulance Driving Manual. If these are claimed the driver must do so safely and there must be no legal stopping / parking alternative available to the same effect. The Highway Code and Road Traffic Regulations for normal road use **MUST BE** complied with at all other times, even if non-emergency personnel have been diverted by Ambulance Control to render first aid.

### **Bus Lanes**

The only exemption non-Emergency vehicles are permitted to claim relates to the use of the bus lanes and would normally only be claimed should any of their passengers' condition deteriorate and not to claim the exemption may put that person at risk. Each Locality within YAS must advise its non-emergency staff of any local agreement or of any Divisional policy regarding this issue. As some Local Authorities allow non-emergency vehicles (such as PTS) to use bus lanes during their period of operation, it is recommended that advice is sought locally. If permission is given, a written confirmation should be requested, and a copy of the letter should be placed in every non-emergency vehicle in case they are questioned by the Police

### **Doctor's Co-operative Vehicles**

**NO EXEMPTIONS** are afforded to any driver using any of the Doctor's Co-operative vehicles under any circumstances, even where Green visual warning and flashing head lights are fitted. There are **NO EXEMPTIONS** given under the Road Traffic Law whilst using these devices. If used there is a serious possibility that the driver would be contravening the Road Traffic Law and be liable to prosecution in addition to the possibility of internal disciplinary actions.

For further information regarding driving YAS vehicles for emergency purposes, please refer to the YAS 24/7 site or contact Roy Dearnley, Senior Driving Tutor on [roy.dearnley@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:roy.dearnley@yas.nhs.uk) or 07789928141



## Appendix 3:

### ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

Under the Road Traffic Act (RTA) 1988 drivers of YAS NHS Trust vehicles are under the same legal obligations relating to road traffic incidents as any other driver. **There are no exemptions, which may be claimed regarding incident reporting.**

When, owing to the presence of a mechanically propelled vehicle on the road, an incident occurs causing injury or damage to:

1. Any person (other than the driver of that vehicle)
2. Any vehicle (other than that motor vehicle or trailer drawn thereby)
3. Any animal (other than an animal in, or on, that motor vehicle or drawn thereby) for the purpose of the RTA. 'Animal' means sheep, horse, ass, goat, pig, cattle, mule or dog.
4. Any other property constructed on, fixed to, growing in or otherwise forming part of the land on which the road in question is situated or land adjacent thereto

**The driver commits an offence if he/she fails:**

To **STOP**

To give, on request of any persons having reasonable ground for doing so:

1. Your name
2. The vehicle owner's name and address
3. The registration and make of the vehicle
4. Insurance details for injury incident

### Reporting to the Police

Should the driver be unable to give the required information i.e. the person has been injured and would not comprehend the information, the owner of the animal or property is not present, then the driver **must** report the incident to a police officer or at a police station as soon as possible and, in any case, within 24 hours.

### At the Scene

There is no legal exemption for leaving the scene of a road traffic collision (RTC), when engaged on an emergency call. EOC should be informed immediately following an incident in order that another vehicle is allocated to the original call if appropriate.

At the scene of an RTC the Trust will require the following actions to be taken:

1. STOP and inform Ops immediately
2. Wear reflective jackets
3. Ensure the scene of the accident is safe
4. Check and treat any injuries
5. Complete, in full, a Scene of Incident Report (TAR2) form ensuring you obtain/exchange details with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties involved, the details of all vehicles involved and any witnesses
6. Request additional back-up if required such as Fire, Police, Clinical Supervisor, etc
7. Take photos if possible

Ensure you report the incident on Datix at the earliest opportunity or at the end of your shift, latest.

Appendix 4:



Yorkshire Ambulance Service



NHS Trust

**POST INCIDENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

The purpose of this 'fact-finder' questionnaire is to identify the circumstances surrounding the incident you have had whilst driving at work; so that we can understand what went wrong and how we might be able to work together to reduce the chances of this happening again.

It is important that you answer all questions as truthfully as possible and all information provided will be treated with the strictest confidence. We will not be using this information to blame individuals, but to look at ways in which we can change working practices or give advice to drivers to reduce the chances of incidents taking place.

We are going to ask you questions about the vehicle and the journey at the time of the incident. We would then like to ask you some general questions about you and well-being.

**In your own words, why do you think this incident occurred?**

.....

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.....

**If you were in the same situation again tomorrow, what would you do differently?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

We would like to ask you some questions about the vehicle you were driving at the time of the incident.

**1. Is this the first time you have driven this make / model of vehicle?**

Yes ☐

No ☐

2. **Was there sufficient time for you to conduct a vehicle safety check before driving the vehicle?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

3. **Were there any defects on the vehicle?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please describe the defects.....

.....

We would now like to ask you some questions about the journey.

1. **What time did the incident occur?**

.....hrs.

2. **How long had you been driving at the time of the incident?**

.....hrs.....mins

3. **How long into your shift were you?**

.....hrs.....mins

4. **How long since your last break?**

.....hrs.....mins

5. **How long to your next break?**

.....hrs.....mins

6. **How long to the end of your shift?**

.....hrs.....mins

7. **How heavy was the traffic at the time of the incident?**

Light ☐ Medium ☐ Heavy ☐

8. **Where had this journey started?**

.....

9. **Did you have any passengers in the vehicle at the time of the incident?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes how many .....

10. **Approximately how many times have you driven this route before?**

0-10 o                      10-50 o                      50+ o

11. **In your opinion could the road layout / features have contributed to this incident?**

Yes ☐                      No ☐

If yes, explain why.....

.....

12. **Had you experienced conflicts with anyone (staff or passengers) prior to the incident?**

Yes o                      No o

If yes, who and what was it about.....

.....

13. **Had anything happened to cause you any worries / anger / upset in the 24 hours prior to the incident?**

Yes o                      No o

Finally, what do you think the Trust could have done to avoid this incident?

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