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Passenger Transport Driver Training Best Practice Report

November 2007



Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Driver Training Best Practice

This review of best practice was undertaken to create a framework within which a Driver Training Strategy could be developed as part of a planned overall Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy.

The most recent comprehensive review of best practice in Driver Training was undertaken by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as part of the Beacon Scheme (Round Seven). This scheme is designed to identify and reward excellence and innovation in local government.

It is recognised that Worcestershire County Council is innovative, as the administration of Driver Training has been separated from Road Safety. This change was made in recognition of the importance of Driver Training in the provision of a high quality public transport service, as well as the part it plays in creating a safer driving environment.

The Beacon Scheme identified certain objectives needed for best practice. These include improved partnership working, an effective data/evidence lead approach, the importance of leadership and culture and the targeting of certain groups

Recommendation 1:

Targeted Driver Training will enhance the safe use of the county's roads by whatever mode. This approach will be developed in full consultation with partners and stakeholders, and will require a thorough review of the objectives and methods of consultation and partnership working.

The expected result is the comprehensive training of drivers for all the different modes of road transport, including public transport provision. This will cover customer care, disability and customer awareness, first aid, as well as traditional driving skills including legislative compliance. It will ensure that we take the lead in championing best practice.

In addition, a targeted approach towards developing risk awareness, and training the most vulnerable groups of road users (newly qualified drivers, the elderly and motorcyclists), will ensure that Worcestershire continues to 'raise the bar' in the overall area of Road Safety.

Recommendation 2:

Driver Training in Worcestershire County Council through cost effective partnership with properly qualified and mentored third party service providers, will offer:

- *Comprehensive driver training for all passenger-carrying vehicles on behalf of Worcestershire County Council.*
- *Driver Assessment as required for all WCC employees/subcontractors, delivering reduced accident rates and improved insurance costs.*
- *Continued delivery on behalf of our partners of Driver Improvement, and any further courses (such as Speed Awareness), which may be introduced as part of a comprehensive offender re-education programme*
- *Delivery of advice, training and assessment for all drivers of passenger carrying vehicles used for private and commercial hire, especially those providing subcontract services for schools, special needs, hackney and private hire taxi in Worcestershire.*
- *Development and delivery of CPC training and assessment programmes from September 2008 (Passengers) and September 2009 (Freight) for all small and medium sized commercial operations in Worcestershire*

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Introduction

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The aim of this document is to report on the results of research into best practice in Driver Training provision by local authorities and private sector service providers, insofar as they support the development and provision of a high quality passenger transport system as set out in the draft Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy for Worcestershire. It will provide the basis for the planning of a training operation to ensure the provision of the highest quality of driving skills, customer service, customer needs and disability awareness for all public transport provision made or controlled by Worcestershire County Council. In addition it aims to set standards for all commercial sector driving in Worcestershire.
- 1.2 The *Methodology* is set out in Section 2, and outlines the aims of this project.
- 1.3 The *Examples of Best Practice* are covered in Section 3. This section lists the examples of best practice, within certain limitations. These limitations are that, unlike Worcestershire, Driver Training in other local and metropolitan authority areas is normally part of a broader Road Safety remit. The effects of best practice thus identified must be seen in this light, and judgements made on the true implications for driver training alone.
- 1.4 Section 4 offers a more detailed consideration of good practice in bus passenger transport. Early results of the measurement of the effects of accredited training by Transport for London are considered. These results will be used as a guideline for the strategy under development.
- 1.5 The *Relevant Outcomes from Current Best Practice* which are deemed to apply to the needs of Worcestershire County Council's Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy are highlighted and discussed in section 4
- 1.6 The *Recommendations* are provided in Section 5. This section covers the elements of best practice, which are deemed appropriate to be considered for inclusion in a Driver Training Strategy for Worcestershire.

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Methodology

2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 A plan was generated to research the provision of driver training best practice in local and metropolitan authorities. Driver Training is normally delivered as part of an overall road safety strategy, however Worcestershire has decided to separate Driver training from Road Safety, and incorporate it into the overall Integrated Transport Services Unit. This will allow the provision of driver training as part of the raising of standards and awareness within the County Council fleet, within all transport subcontracted by the County Council, and by example, within the training provision to Worcestershire in general.
- 2.2 The Beacon Scheme which identifies excellence and innovation in local government, concentrated on Road Safety in Round Seven, and gave this definition, *"Road safety is about saving people's lives and helping to keep them from harm. It affects all people of all ages whether they are drivers, riders, pedestrians or passengers. Road safety is a diverse activity. It incorporates education for children, advanced driver training, retraining for offenders, design of casualty reduction schemes and traffic regulation"* (Beacon Themes 2006).
- 2.3 The Beacon Scheme was identified as the latest consideration of best practice applying to Driver Training within an overall Road Safety remit, and the submissions of the six winning authorities were considered in detail to underpin this report.
- 2.4 The other key documents outlining general UK Road Safety best practice reviewed were:
- *Government road safety strategy, "Tomorrows roads - safer for everyone."* (2000)
 - *Audit Commission report on Road Safety, "Changing Lanes"* (2006)
 - *Audit Commission, "Review of Road Safety Good Practice in English Local Authorities"* (2006)
 - *DSA Business Plan 2007-8 - Vision & Mission*
 - *RoSPA's "Vision for Road Safety"*
 - *Government Response to OFT Report - "The regulation of licensed Taxi and PHV Services in the UK"* (2004)
- 2.5 Further consideration of Driver Training was made for particular modes of passenger transport. This identified the following documents which offered examples of good practice in those areas:
- *Bus Industry- Good Practice Guide in Staff Recruitment & Retention (Bus Partnership Forum) Department for Transport.2006*
 - *London Assembly Transport Committee- The Driver on the Bus- Transport Committee's review of bus driving standards in London (October 2005)*
 - *Oxford Bus Company - Environmental & Social Report (2007)*
 - *Passenger Transport Executive Group (PTEG) Good Practice Guide - Transport & Social Inclusion.*
 - *Halcrow-GMPTE - Travel Training Good Practice Guidance (June 2005)*
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- A comprehensive search of Internet sources was undertaken to review policies worldwide. Examples found and considered were:
 - *Road Safety Best Practices (Examples & Recommendations) 2005 - Global Road Safety Partnership, Geneva Switzerland.*
 - *Review of best practice road safety initiatives in the corporate and/or business environment - Monash University, Australia.*
 - *Work Related Road Safety - Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia.*
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Examples of Best Practice

3 EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE

3.1 The Beacon Scheme (Round Seven) invited submissions from local authorities wishing to show excellence and innovation in the area of Road Safety. Beacon Status was awarded to six authorities.

3.2 Devon County Council

3.2.1 As a result of its approach, Devon is one of the safest shire counties in which to drive. In a recent survey, 64% of Devon people said they felt travelling in the county was safer than anywhere else in the country.

3.2.2 Devon showed a clear philosophy underlying the approach to casualty reduction - targeting the offenders, rather than the victims. The inspectors said, "The particular strength is the vision and innovation that led the council to target its interventions toward securing behavioural change in drivers."

3.2.3 The inspectors also noted that the road safety team has demonstrated many good initiatives with partners, especially the police, and achieves high levels of satisfaction with clients such as schools and driver re-training.

3.3 Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

3.3.1 Knowsley's approach followed three initiatives:

- A pedestrian awareness and parental education campaign for Year 1 children and their parents/carers, assessing and grading their road crossing capability. A later assessment determined that 'most unsafe' behaviour had halved.
- 'Intelligent' ice cream vans (ICVs) were developed as a result of a tragic accident, with sensors, cameras and mirrors to improve driver visibility.

To improve driver visibility, all Knowsley's ICVs (and other mobile trader vans) have been fitted with sensors at the front, infrared cameras at the back, and 'wrap-around' mirrors. The 'child ran out' casualties have reduced from 3.8 per year to 1.5 per year. (This initiative won the IHT/Bitumen Road Safety Award for Reducing Child Casualties in 2004)

- The final initiative is 'fast lane radar sessions'. For the last decade, the road safety team has been working with Year 5/6 children to establish accurate speeds of vehicles in and around their local environment; conducting surveys into seat-belt usage; and estimating stopping distances from 20, 30, and 40mph. The data invariably confirms that many drivers/riders travel in excess of the speed limits and that seat belt usage is not universal.

3.4 Lincolnshire County Council

Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP) claims to be a leader in road safety through its innovative and effective means of delivering road safety

services. Beacon status was based on the view of the excellent partnership working and the programmes introduced.

3.4.1 These included the introduction of portable interactive hazard warning signs and special speed limits to benefit villages and local communities, and Young Driver Challenge for 17-24 year olds and Driving for Life for over 65s. Substantial reductions in KSI figures were achieved.

3.5 Norfolk County Council

3.5.1 Norfolk County Council's approach is to identify problems, tailor solutions and involve local communities in the delivery of its road safety programmes. Norfolk exhibits a strong partnership approach with engineering, enforcement and health bodies, and a data led approach to targeted casualty reduction.

3.5.2 Norfolk's initiatives are a combination of use of signs, education of children and driver training for staff and young people, ensuring a high quality of driving instructors and participation in the Driver Improvement scheme.

3.6 Northamptonshire County Council

3.6.1 Northamptonshire Casualty Reduction Partnership was considered outstanding for the programmes introduced and the results achieved.

3.6.2 A database approach highlighted groups disproportionately at risk of accident involvement such as motorcyclists. This approach has brought about a reduction in children killed and motorcyclists involved in KSI accidents. The latter reduction despite an increase in motorcycle usage. The intelligence based route profiling system has identified priority routes for action and led to the A43 Kettering-Corby being classified under the European Road Assessment Programme as the most improved route in Britain.

3.7 Nottingham City Council

3.7.1 Nottingham City Council pursued a progressive management culture, fully integrating road safety into a transportation planning strategy. This has sustained creativity, encouraged calculated risks, focuses on delivery and exploits income generation opportunities.

3.7.2 Partnership working has been an important part of ensuring delivery, even to some hard reach groups in areas of acute deprivation and road safety.

Objectives of Best Practice identified by the Beacon Road Safety Awards

- *Improved partnership working*
 - *How to build sustainable relationships*
 - *Understanding what constitutes effective partnerships*
- *Effective data/evidence lead approach to service improvement*
 - *Accessing, understanding and working with good data*
 - *Measuring outcomes to improve feedback*
- *Effective communication and community engagement*
 - *The importance of communications with and involvement of partners, stakeholders and the wider public at all stages of projects.*
 - *Thinking about how to change attitudes*

- *The importance of leadership and culture*
 - *Identify and promote motivation/inspiration/innovation*
 - *Supporting a road safety focus*
 - *Working where the data leads*
- *Target groups*
 - *Young people*
 - *Re-training for offenders*
 - *Motorcyclists*
- *Hard to reach areas*
 - *Rural areas including migrant workers*
 - *Deprived communities*
 - *City areas and the evening-time economy*
 - *Parents*

3.8 Specific examples for Bus Driver Training

One of the key factors in the training of drivers for bus operators has been staff retention, as driver turnover is a significant barrier to maintaining standards. Companies such as Metro and Travel West Midlands have concentrated heavily on induction programmes to strengthen employee's commitment to the companies. This is achieved by accelerated delivery about the company, its nature, standards and working practices as well as involving senior management in the training programme. By retaining staff, the companies aim to be able to maintain standards by maintaining the level of trained drivers serving the customers.

3.9 Driver Training Qualifications

- 3.9.1 Transport for London and Arriva have tried to standardise the training delivery across their regions by use of BTEC and NVQ qualifications. Transport for

London as a franchising authority is able to intervene in ways that other organisations cannot.

3.9.2 The BTEC programme, accredited and monitored by EdExcel, was rolled-out across London to bus drivers and conductors to attempt to raise standards. The five main elements of the programme are:

- *Introduction to the Bus Industry*
- *Operating the bus service*
- *Health, Safety & Security*
- *Driving Skills*
- *Working with others*

3.10 The purpose of driver training qualifications

3.10.1 The main purpose of accredited driver training programmes was to address the nature of complaints received from passengers. A study in 2005 concluded that of the 43,043 complaints (0.002% of all passenger journeys), 34,634 were attributable to drivers. Although a very small proportion of the total, Age Concern pointed out that one single incident, reported or not, can have a significant effect on a more vulnerable passenger's confidence in using the service, with serious effects on an older person's ability to live an active and independent life.

3.10.2 The nature of the complaints made about drivers, which training in customer needs and expectations was designed to address were:

- Alleged physical assault/threatening or rude behaviour/unprofessional attitude
- Poor appearance/listening to music/using a mobile/smoking/talking
- Poor or dangerous driving
- Refusing passengers with wheelchairs/pushchairs/walking frames/pets
- Attitude based on race/faith/age/disability/gender/sexuality/appearance

3.10.3 In addition, customers highlighted the following practical driving problems:

- Failure to get close to the kerb.
- Not allowing those unsteady on their feet to sit down before moving off.
- Poorly-policed bus lanes leading to higher speeds, higher cornering speeds and sharper braking.

3.11 Other initiatives

Other initiatives have been introduced in other areas with training academies and other packages. The latter have often been concentrated on home to college transport and dealing with behaviour and confrontation management, with or without the aid of CCTV.

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Relevant Outcomes From Current Best Practice

4 RELEVANT OUTCOMES FROM CURRENT BEST PRACTICE

4.1 In the light of these objectives, three of the Beacon winners were considered in more detail, as the specifics of their projects are most closely related to the needs of Worcestershire. The lessons from the Transport for London study were also taken into account to underpin recommendations for the design of driver training programmes for passenger transport.

4.2 Devon County Council

4.2.1 Devon County Council is one of only four local transport authorities to have been awarded Centre of Excellence status for the Local Transport Plan period 2001-11 with particular reference to its performance for road safety.

- *Devon is a high achiever for road safety in terms of:*
- *Outcomes - lowest killed and seriously injured (KSI) rate among English counties 2004*
- *Quality - International Organization for Standardisation (ISO)9001: 2000 road safety driver education and training services*
- *Innovation - consistent focus since 1991 on improving driver/rider behaviour with police and approved driving instructor profession, creating a national momentum through driver improvement, drink drive and speed awareness interventions*
- *And continuous improvement*

4.2.2 Road safety in Devon is embedded within the aims of the Strategic Partnership, Local Area Agreement (2005-8), and Local Transport Plan. A performance management framework for road safety will inform the delivery of the Road Safety Strategy 2006-11.

4.2.3 Devon's style is to integrate its road safety work across professions and disciplines, across geographical boundaries, and within the agenda for sustainable travel. It is a mature organisation, with vibrant enthusiastic staff and top-level support.

4.2.4 Challenges

- *To achieve road safety results consistent with the green agenda of the authority*
- *Widely dispersed rural communities with safety concerns and a population polarised by age but sharing high-risk profiles and an expectation to drive*
- *High proportion of KSI injuries to motorcyclists*
- *To target resources according to collision data, research evidence and corporate agendas*

4.2.5 Examples of innovation and excellence recognised in Devon are:

- *Harmonised school and workplace travel planning, and TravelWise, within the road safety structure. Joined up road safety aims with public and school transport. Built road safety into the delivery and*
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management of the Exeter Cycle Demonstration Town 2006-09 and ensured that sustained environmental improvements were central to the overall design of the Exeter Home Zone project

- *Embedded road safety practitioners within 8 Local Service Groups. Educationists, engineers and police working together locally to assess and deliver appropriate and balanced responses to speed issues and requests for engineering*
- *A clear multi-agency and multi-pronged approach to improve rider skills, improve the carriageway, identify high-risk violators for psychology-based re-education. Safety Auditors, engineers and highway inspectors trained to ride motorcycles to assess carriageway changes from the point of view of the rider*
- *Staff CPD in Evidence Based Practice (course developed in partnership with Plymouth University July 2006 as part of our Beacon commitment). Targeting children with particular vulnerabilities within the Every Child Matters agenda. Targeting drivers at risk with courses for HMP inmates, Connexions Pathways clients, Drink Drive Offenders, Violating Bikers, low level driving offenders and higher mileage company employees*

4.2.6 Beacon rollout 'specialisms' arising directly from these challenges and programmes:

- *Effective evidence-led approaches to service improvement*
- *Target groups (with specific reference to motorcyclists, young people and high risk drivers)*
- *Leadership, culture and skills (creating and developing an organisation capable of delivering excellence)*

Outcomes of the Devon Scheme

Devon is a high achiever for Road Safety in terms of:

- *The lowest killed and seriously injured (KSI) rate among English counties.*
 - *International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO)9001:2000 road safety and driver education services*
 - *Innovation in a consistent focus since 1991 on improving driver/rider behaviour with the police and approved driving instructor profession, creating a national momentum through driver improvement, drink drive and speed awareness interventions.*
 - *Continuous improvement.*
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4.3 Norfolk County Council

4.3.1 Norfolk County Council is regarded as a centre of excellence for LTP delivery. It has achieved this by recognizing that saving lives and reducing injuries through better road safety can only be brought about by creating an environment for change:

- *Change to road layout*
- *Change to road condition*
- *Change to vehicle design, and*
- *Change to road user skills and attitudes*

It is the final point in this list, which is of most importance to this report.

4.3.2 Challenges

- *Thirty five per cent of KSI road accident casualties in Norfolk occur on the county's non built-up 'A' class network compared with 23 per cent nationally. A significantly higher proportion of Norfolk's KSI casualties occur as car occupants. The higher figures for Norfolk reflect its rural nature and its extensive, relatively unimproved principal road network*
- *Research indicates that child casualties in the deprived areas of Great Yarmouth and areas of Norwich were significantly higher than less deprived neighbourhoods. We need to keep pressure on this issue*
- *More older drivers are having and causing crashes on Norfolk roads than national averages. Our demography illustrates that this issue will be compounded by a much higher than national average of people in the 50-54 and over age bracket. Thus in the next ten years we are likely to have an increasing number of road traffic crashes involving older people.*

4.3.3 Within these three challenges, Worcestershire mirrors in part the rural nature of the Norfolk road system, and in some areas the higher than national average proportion of the population in the higher age brackets.

Outcomes of the Norfolk Scheme

Norfolk County Council has taken the lead on the development of the Norfolk Accident Reduction Partnership (NARP).

- *Development of a Road Casualty Reduction Group chaired by the Council, with members from Police, Highways Agency, Fire Service, Ambulance, Primary Care and Hospital Trusts, and Norwich City Council.*
- *Joint objectives for casualty reduction*
- *Joint action plans*
- *Establishment of sub groups focusing on:*
 - Enforcement and engineering
 - Data analysis
 - Education training and publicity
 - Safety camera partnership
 - Co-ordinated response at road crash sites

4.3.4 The quality approach allows an improved delivery of major schemes, for example:

- *The £1 million national mixed priority demonstration project in Prince of Wales Road Norwich*
 - *Successful accident investigation based highway improvement programme*
 - *Move to Eurorap based route studies approach*
 - *Moving to more casualty based prioritization of highway improvements*
 - *More formal partnership approach to strengthen inter-agency relationships*
 - *Extensive use of vehicle activated speed signs (VAS)*
 - *Driver training for staff leading to reduced accident costs*
 - *Well established young driver training (NORDRIVE)*
 - *Use of Approved Driving Instructors and Road Safety Assistants to enhance capacity*
 - *Pedestrian training through Kerbcraft*
 - *Progressive move to more drivers training as an alternative to prosecution with National Driver Improvement Scheme and exploring extension to other opportunities.*
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4.4 Nottingham City Council

- 4.4.1 Nottingham City Council has been responsible for road safety since it became a unitary authority in 1998. The council has shared the commitment of the DfT and directed a substantial proportion of the Local Transport Plan settlement to local safety schemes. These schemes are fully integrated into the strategic transport strategy, which provides added value by ensuring that construction work is co-ordinated with maintenance, bus infrastructure improvements, pedestrian facilities and urban regeneration.
- 4.4.2 The benefits have been achieved with the aid of a progressive management culture, which has established partnerships to enhance delivery to 'hard to reach' groups such as areas of acute deprivation or riders of performance motorcycles.
- 4.4.3 This investment has been supplemented by self-financing initiatives such as the Safety Camera Partnership, the Driver Improvement Programme, decriminalised enforcement and successful award bidding, including the Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative.
- 4.4.4 By 2004 Nottingham City had already achieved the Government's killed or seriously injured casualty reduction targets, 5 years ahead of the 2010 objective.

Outcomes of the Nottingham Scheme

The benefits of this approach have been demonstrated in substantial casualty savings.

- *Casualty reduction targets achieved five years ahead of the 2010 target*
- *New more challenging targets set 20% higher*
- *International recognition for pioneering work on digital speed cameras.*
- *National recognition for work on:*
 - Home zones
 - Motorcycle fatalities
 - Traffic calming
 - Road safety publicity
 - Safety auditing, research and GIS for casualty analysis

4.5 Transport for London

- 4.5.1 The Transport for London Transport Select Committee in its report recognised the need for training and an accredited programme to standardise delivery. However, in presenting the results, the report pointed out that by early 2005 the secret customer survey recognised no difference between those drivers who had completed the BTEC training course and those who had not. A more comprehensive DSA monitoring exercise pointed to only a marginal improvement in standards.
- 4.5.2 The committee recommended that the input and advice of local user groups be integrated into the BTEC training scheme. It further recommended the introduction of financial penalties within the franchise contracts on renewal to introduce a financial incentive to the franchisees to invest in the development and implementation of training.

Outcomes of the Transport for London Scheme

The benefits of this approach, when tested in 2005, appear to be marginal, at best, according to independent surveys. This would indicate the need to ensure a strong input in course content and development to ensure a quality delivery as recommended by the Transport Select Committee of Transport for London

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Recommendations

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 This is not an exhaustive study, because those authorities surveyed under the Beacon Scheme deliver driver training as part of the overall Road Safety programme.
- 5.2 However the future of Driver Training should not be governed by the historic position, in that the new and proposed legislative changes governing all modes of transport mean that the future required standards for driver training will need to be far more exhaustive. Driver training delivery will benefit from this independence, as it seeks to cover the two key areas of due diligence (the meeting of legislative requirements) and best practice (to meet the needs of all other direct and indirect road users).
- 5.3 Further, Worcestershire County Council as a major provider of and subcontractor of passenger, education and special needs transport, has the opportunity to take a lead in the setting of both driving standards, customer care and disability awareness for all members of the community.
- 5.4 The lessons of organisations such as Transport for London and their Select Committee's report of 2005 must be taken into account in the specification of training to be delivered for passenger transport vehicles of all types, given the modest results of the training introduced thus far.
- 5.5 Within the context of an Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy, training of drivers of passenger carrying vehicles of all types must take into account the need to 'delight and care for' the customer. Drivers must become fully aware, through training, of the needs of all users. The training will help develop strategies for ensuring that these needs are taken into account in the way they interact with customers, recognise and respond to any difficulties passengers encounter using the service (particularly through disability), and control the vehicle being fully aware of risks to passengers and other road users.
- 5.6 It will be necessary for a thorough review of the objectives, methods of consultation and information dissemination from all partnership agreements, which impinge on the Driver Training area. This will ensure that those representing Worcestershire County Council on all related partnership committees are properly briefed on the needs and demands of the new legislative environment, and better able to influence our partners in the improved delivery of driver training throughout the county.
- 5.7 Driver Training in Worcestershire County Council through cost effective partnership with properly qualified and mentored third party service providers, will offer:
- *Comprehensive driver training for all passenger-carrying vehicles on behalf of Worcestershire County Council.*
 - *Driver Assessment as required for all WCC employees/subcontractors, delivering reduced accident rates and improved insurance costs.*
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- *Continued delivery on behalf of our partners of Driver Improvement, and any further courses (such as Speed Awareness), which may be introduced as part of a comprehensive offender re-education programme*
- *Delivery of advice, training and assessment for all drivers of passenger carrying vehicles used for private and commercial hire, especially those providing subcontract services for schools, special needs, hackney and private hire taxi in Worcestershire.*
- *Development and delivery of CPC training and assessment programmes from September 2008 (Passengers) and September 2009 (Freight) for all small and medium sized commercial operations in Worcestershire.*

5.8 Consistent future monitoring of legislation, environmental requirements and industry trends, will ensure that future course developments in conjunction with third party providers will continue to 'raise the bar' in Worcestershire.
