

JOINT EMERGENCY SERVICES
HIGH SPEED DRIVER TRAINING ADVISORY GROUP

2008

Provision of High Speed Driver Training

CODE OF PRACTICE

If an organisation or outside provider wanted to set-up a training body and provide High Speed Driver Training, what would they need to do and how would they ensure drivers completing the training were approved to exceed speed limits when working for the right organisation?

High Speed Driver Training

Overview

High speed driver training is primarily focused on the competencies of a driver to use his or her discretion as to when and where to exceed the speed limit on a road or for a vehicle, wisely, and the skill to do so as safely as is possible given need and circumstances.

It is therefore necessary to provide a complete system which will ensure any training establishment, instructors, training and assessment meets both a level of quality and most importantly drivers who meet the competencies required.

To this end there is a suite of codes setting out the basic and minimum levels necessary to meet a high speed driver competency, accepting that organisations providing emergency response will need to provide more training to meet their duty of care for staff and the public and Health & Safety responsibilities. These standards and competencies are therefore a minimum and not expected to make up the entire competency required.

To provide 'High Speed training' you will need to satisfy yourself that you can meet the Codes of Practice provided in this suite, as follows:

- **Provision of High Speed Driver Training** – setting out training bodies, accreditation and summarising other codes
- **High Speed Instructor Competency** – making sure those assessing competency, setting training needs and providing that training are competent and to a consistent level
- **High Speed Driver Competency and Training** – setting out the competencies necessary to meet high speed driver approval and those areas necessary when training need is identified
- **High Speed Assessor Competency** – not compulsory but available should any training body prefer to train and use experienced emergency response drivers to assess others competencies and identify training needs
- **High Speed Driver Training Quality Assurance** – The outcome of a skilled and competent driver must be achieved and to ensure this the system set out in the codes must be quality assured to this minimum standard.

Provision of High Speed Driver Training

CODE OF PRACTICE

Introduction

There is a suite of codes which, when introduced together, will provide any emergency service requiring the exemption to speed, in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended by the Road Safety Act 2006 and regulations under this Act, with suitable High Speed Training. These codes of practice have been developed by the Joint Emergency Service High Speed Driver Training Advisory Group, who represented the three emergency services, the Serious Organised Crime Agency and other key stakeholders such as DSA, IAM and RoSPA, operating under the auspices of the Department for Transport.

The development of these Codes of Practice is in response to the Road Safety Act 2006 which introduces significant changes to the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984. In essence, these changes mean that only drivers who have satisfactorily completed a course of training in driving vehicles at 'high speed' will be exempt from speed limits, when the vehicle is being used for "fire and rescue authority purposes, ambulance, police or Serious Organised Crime purposes."

For the purposes of these draft standards, 'high speed' is defined as:

"a driver, from an emergency service, is driving at high speed when he or she legally decides to use the exemption and exceed the speed limit, on any stretch of road, so as to enable them to arrive at an incident or carry out other activities of the service where the higher speed was necessary such as:

- attending an emergency call
- investigating, preventing or stopping the commission of a crime
- helping a member of the public who is in urgent need of emergency assistance.
- Training

"High speed should be construed as any speed which exceeds that of any statutory speed limit in force on the road at that time. It might also be interpreted as a speed which is below the statutory speed limit but in excess of a speed which would be appropriate to the prevailing road conditions at the time."

This High Speed Driver Training Code of Practice (CoP) is not the training course but a code which brings together the entire process:

- Provision of High Speed Driver Training CoP
- High Speed Driver Competency and Training CoP
- High Speed Instructor Competency CoP
- High Speed Driver Training Quality Assurance CoP

How does an emergency service provide high speed driver training and ensure all staff who are likely to need to exceed speed restrictions whilst driving a vehicle for the purpose of that emergency service?

Most of the current emergency services have in-house driver training and already provide credible training. The changes to the Road Traffic Regulation Act are not intended to alter suitable training and or force an emergency service to fund any bureaucratic change to the current process of training and quality assurance. What it is requiring is for those who already train to ensure their training system and the outcome of trained drivers meet the basic needs of High Speed Training codes of practice and for those not currently training but needing to introducing new training, or changing their training system, to use the codes when setting this up or making changes.

The clear message throughout the codes is that high speed training is a part of the competencies required by each and every emergency driver, not the lowest level of training. It is expected that all courses would include high speed competencies as well as other occupational competencies such as specific vehicle handling characteristics and role requirements examples of which are pursuit and vehicle stopping.

In essence, high speed competencies will be a part of any occupational training or national occupational standard, necessary to equip a driver for the role, satisfy Health and Safety and provide an organisational response to their duty of care to employees and the public who may well be put at risk.

High Speed Driver Training (HSDT) is a set of minimum competencies which need to be included in the wider training needs that are provided to drivers.

Training must be provided by a training body, with instructors who meet the standards required and who are assessing training needs, providing the training and developing drivers who meet the level of safety this legislation requires. Overall this system of competency assessment and training must meet the quality and outcome desired.

Training Bodies and Training Establishments

What are training establishments and/or training body?

It is important that the driver competencies necessary are, when training is required, provided by a structure which is suitable and focussed on the outcome desired, safe drivers. It would not be suitable to train a single instructor and then permit that instructor to singularly assess student competencies, set any level of training necessary, provide that training and then assess the outcome. This practice, if adopted, would allow for training 'drift' and unchecked could lead to a lowering of competency outcome and our aim for safe drivers. It was however accepted that in the very best examples this could meet some of the needs of High Speed Training, but that there would be a real risk if this were to be encouraged.

Each emergency service needs to employ a training body, either internally or through a contract. That body could be made up from more than one training establishment and would need to provide structure and enough properly trained staff to undertake the very

different roles of:

- Competency assessment and Training
- Cross checking
- Final assessment of competency

Considering the distinct roles, outlined above, a training body would need to have three instructors or more, as less would not stand the level of scrutiny necessary when considering that this training is permitting a driver, in the right circumstances, to exceed speed limits.

This does not stop a training establishment being less than three instructors, however any establishment not able to carry out the three minimum roles could not be classified as a training body and would need to partner another establishment so as to satisfy this need.

A 'training establishment' would therefore be smaller than the size needed to meet high speed driver training and to satisfy the requirements in this CoP, would need to partner another establishment.

A 'training body' would be a minimum of three instructors, capable of providing competency assessment, training, cross checking and final assessment. It could of course be much bigger and the roles mentioned in this CoP, covered by many different instructors depending on availability and structure.

Any service providing high speed driver development should review the training body to make sure it meets these requirements for structure.

Training Body Accreditation

Emergency services providing emergency response and currently authorised to exceed the speed limit, when the purpose meets legislation, have proven training structures and competencies which the additional requirements to the Road Traffic Regulation Act, in the Road Safety Act 2006, were not intended to alter or add additional burden too. It is however necessary to make sure that all training bodies meet a minimum standard. This Guidance and Regulation is intended to encourage consistency and permit any new organisation or company to provide suitable staff with similar training and skills, so as to enable them too to produce drivers to use any exemption their organisation/purpose can claim.

Accreditation should be achievable either through peer evaluation administered by an approved system or by using accredited bodies similar to the Government supported Skills Council. It is accepted that it is necessary to introduce High Speed driver training but with the associated structures causing as little disruption to current procedure and where possible with little additional cost to the emergency services. This can be achieved with final accreditation authorisation provided by DfT or a DfT Agency, supported with a steering group of experts, where prospective and current providers will submit a case outlining how they will meet minimum standards for training body authorisation.

The High Speed Driver Training Steering Group which is recommended is formed and meets this role, will look at these codes of practice, the training body being used and standard quality assurance, before advising DfT of its suitability. In the case of large organisations this could be simply through one application, supported by all parts of that organisation and including the structure and procedure for multi training bodies.

An example of this is the police service where the entire service may apply for accreditation for all 51 forces as one training system. The service will nominate peer evaluations and submit suitability reports on each training body within the scheme. If accepted DfT will accredit the scheme.

A further example could be one using an approved accreditation body.

An example of this might be the fire and rescue service who may decide to use a Skill Council (or similar organisation). Their Skills Council will nominate Fire and Rescue experts to peer evaluate their training establishments and with DfT approval, the Skills Council will accredit the training bodies of the Fire and Rescue Service.

It would be possible for any training establishment or body to apply to DfT for accreditation. This would be submitted to the High Speed Driver Training Steering Group in a similar fashion to those explained above, where the application will be examined. As with application from an emergency service this would be carried out as part of the steering group work, however, any inspection or additional work by the steering group or a nominated training body would need to be funded by the applicant.

Successful application will simply require input onto a simple register and notification by way of letter. Accreditation should be initially for a period of 5 years and then in further periods of 5 years after that initial assessment and with quality assurance review.

What would the training body need to have?

Code of Practice for High Speed Driver Instructor Competencies

An instructor's role includes assessment of driver competency (this can be achieved through specifically trained assessors), identification of training need, planning the training required, instructing and final assessment. This requires a trainer to be at a suitable level of expertise and to have undergone specific instructor training. Simply being a high speed driver or previous trainer is not sufficient.

The outcome of any High Speed Training relies on the abilities to assess competency, set realistic training and produce a final student at the level of skill required. This is where instructor experience and training are vital. An approved training body must employ instructors who meet the competencies and requirements in the code of practice for High Speed Driver Instructor Competency

Instructors will be assessed against those competencies similarly to the training body, every 5 years and records will be kept by the training body.

Code of Practice for High Speed Driver Assessor Competency

Competency assessment necessary for training needs analysis and of high speed drivers at 5 year intervals may be carried out by an approved instructor or by a specifically trained assessor who meets the competencies in the Assessors Competency Code of Practice.

CoP- High Speed Driver Training Competency

Competency based training is currently provided in most areas where it is seen as appropriate, cost effective and achieving the highest level without overtraining. Training bodies and instructors engaged in high speed training should ensure drivers are at the competency level outlined in this specific code of practice.

It must be stressed that this is the minimum competency necessary for any emergency response driver to exceed a speed limit safely. Any training does not cover vehicle peculiarities such as LGV (Fire Engines), vans (Ambulances or PSUs) or motorcycles (Paramedics or Police Road Policing) nor does it cover specialist vehicle operations such as stopping vehicles, pursuit or surveillance; all these require additional training added to the 'High Speed training' to meet organisational responsibility and Health & Safety needs.

Organisations involved in emergency service where their purposes would require suitable staff trained in high speed driving will from time to time identify new drivers for training. These drivers will initially be observed and assessed against the competencies outlined in the basic High Speed Driver Competency and Training Code of Practice. Observation and assessment will identify their driving ability and their training needs. Training will then be provided paying attention to the high speed driver training competencies identified as necessary and any further organisational competencies.

At the conclusion of the training if a driver is considered suitable they will receive notification that they are qualified as a high speed driver and this will be recorded by the accredited training body as well as the driver's organisation.

Accreditation will last for 5 years. Within this time frame they will again undergo competency assessment and either receive up to a further 5 years accreditation or return for identified competency training. Record will again be kept.

High Speed Driver Training Quality Assurance

Competency based training is the most cost effective way of training the large numbers necessary to maintain an emergency service, however, this is not to be achieved through any compromise on training, driver skill and likely reduction in road safety. To keep

competencies and training approaches up-to-date as well as maintaining quality and the desired outcome from this training, there is a need to build a training system which provides feedback and quality assessment.

As previously stated each training establishment/body will be periodically examined to make sure it is reaching the level of quality required of high speed drivers. Part of this assessment will include cross checking the training establishment/body report of self assessment against the different criteria outlined in the High Speed Driver Training Quality Assurance Code of Practice.