

Blue light users working party expectations document

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

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

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

- element one - the ability to assess the need for an emergency response
- element two - the ability to drive the vehicle safely to emergencies
- element three - the ability to demonstrate the correct attitude when responding to emergencies

Element one – assessment for the need for emergency response

Performance criteria

- ensure the vehicle is suitable and ready for emergency response
- assess the need to respond using emergency audible and visual warning devices
- display awareness of responsibilities and legal requirements when deciding upon the need for an emergency response
- assess the need for continued response
- comply with organisation's instructions

Range statements

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

Underpinning knowledge

Road Traffic Law

Civil Law (duty of care)

Health and Safety Law

Service policy and directives

Highway Code

Roadcraft

Human aspects of Police Driving (suitable for all emergency response drivers)

Legal exemptions



Element two – driving vehicle safely in response to emergencies

Performance criteria

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

Range statements

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

Underpinning knowledge

Road Traffic Law

Civil Law

Health and Safety Law

Service policy and directives

Highway Code

Roadcraft

Human aspects of Police Driving (suitable for all emergency response drivers)

Radio procedures

Legal exemptions

Element three – driver essential attitudes

Performance criteria

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

Range statements

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

Underpinning knowledge

Road Traffic Law

Civil Law

Health and Safety Law

Service policy and directives

Highway Code

Roadcraft

Human aspects of Police driving (suitable for all emergency response drivers)

Radio procedures

Legal exemptions