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**VAN DRIVER TOOKIT WINS ‘OUTSTANDING PRODUCT OF THE YEAR’**

**FLEET NEWS AWARD**

National Highways has won another coveted Fleet News Award, this time for its Van Driver Toolkit, developed by the Commercial Vehicle Incident Prevention Team as part of the Driving for Better Business programme. It won ‘Outstanding Product of the Year’.

The free toolkit features more than 30 free online modules for van driver training, aiming to make the UK road network safer for all users and to support operators, managers and, importantly, drivers, better understand their duties and responsibilities. It tackles many of the most important issues facing driver and vehicle managers such as vehicle roadworthiness, fatigue, distraction and overloading. It was created with the support of National Highways Van Operator Reference Group made up of 40 representatives of some of the best-run van fleets in the UK. To date, the resources have been accessed by 1300 organisations with more than 1.3 million van drivers, and adopted by many Trade Associations, which have, in turn, shared with their own members.

In presenting the Award, National Highways was commended for “looking after the interest of the whole country and the judges hope that all fleet operators take advantage of this free online resource, though it is clear many do already”.

Mark Cartwright, Head of the Commercial Vehicle Incident Prevention Team at Highways England said: “Something I’ve noticed since being at National Highways is the difference between the way truck and van drivers tend to react when, for example, being spoken to by Police about their compliance.

“It’s a bit of a sweeping generalisation but truck drivers tend to accept they’re doing wrong, they know what they should have been doing and accept ‘it’s a fair cop’. Van drivers on the other hand tend to have a hundred reasons why they didn’t know how to comply. And that’s exactly what the Van Driver Toolkit is designed to help with – to take away the ‘sorry, I didn’t know’ response.

“The operation of vans is a risky business. It is the most dangerous part of the day for any van driver regardless of any other duties they may have, and it is well-documented that vans are involved in more fatal and serious incidents than any other class of vehicle on our roads. They are also the fastest-growing class of vehicles on the road and this growth is showing little sign of slowing down,” he adds.

Since its inception in 2007, Driving for Better Business has engaged with thousands of businesses in pursuit of its mission: to improve the levels of compliance for all those who drive or ride for work by demonstrating the significant benefits of managing work-related road risk more effectively. Through the Driving for Better Business programme, those organisations which collectively employ millions of staff who drive for work have access to a range of free tools and resources for employers, along with examples of good practice and strong leadership.

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**About Driving for Better Business**

Driving for work is one of the highest-risk activities that many employees undertake, whether they drive a commercial vehicle, a company car or make occasional work journeys in their own vehicle. As the gig economy continues to grow, this also means those who ride for work as well as those who drive.

Driving for Better Business is a free to access government-backed National Highways programme, delivered in partnership with RoadSafe, to help employers in the private and public sectors reduce work-related road risk, protecting staff who drive or ride for work, and others who they may share the road with.

Our mission is to improve the levels of compliance for all those who drive or ride for work by demonstrating the significant business benefits of managing work-related road risk more effectively.

<https://www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/>

Photo attached left to right: Huw Edwards, host of the event; Fiona Pick, Project Manager at National Highways; Mark Cartwright, Head of Commercial Vehicle Incident Prevention at National Highways; Sharon Mitchell, Programme Development Manager at Driving for Better Business; Steffen Karlsson, CEO, System Edström Group, sponsor of the Award.