

Safety Alert

Mobile phone and seat belts

15 June 2021

Background information

Using a mobile phone while driving and not wearing a seat belt are part of the **Fatal 4**.

Operation Tramline* demonstrates the prevalence of such behaviours on the SRN, with over 50% of its identified offences being mobile phone and seat belt non compliance.

We're trialling the use of systems in a live, on-road environment to better understand compliance. We're developing interventions to help us understand and subsequently mitigate against behaviours which pose risks to road users and workers.

Early data suggests these offences are happening at scale, with an average of 126 mobile phone offences and 56 seat belt detections per day. This data was taken from lane 1 only and therefore the scale of this risk could be much higher.

Directors and managers have responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, to ensure any driving risks are minimised, underpinned by appropriate policies and procedures. These policies must be communicated to all drivers, so they are able to follow them. Policies regarding mobile phone use should be clearly explained, including in circumstances where staff may have cause to phone a colleague whilst driving.

For more information visit:

www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com

*<http://assets.highwaysengland.co.uk/Commercial+Vehicles/Operation+tramline+leaflet.pdf>



Driver using phone, passenger without a seat belt

Lessons Learnt

- You are 4 times more likely to be in a crash if you use a phone, with your reaction time being 3 times slower.
- If you're caught using a handheld phone while driving, you'll get 6 penalty points and a £200 fine. If you're a professional driver, you could be fined up to £2,500, increased insurance costs and risk losing your job.
- Using a hands-free device (e.g. for navigation) is not illegal, but can distract you and affect your ability to drive safely and therefore should be avoided.
- In a collision, you're twice as likely to die if you don't wear a seat belt.
- Drivers and passengers who fail to wear seat belts are breaking the law and could face on-the-spot fines of £100, and in some cases, more severe penalties.