

# Health and safety is imperative for van operations

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All employers have a responsibility to manage health and safety, and operators of vans are no exception. There is a requirement to have policies, procedures and safe systems of work in place to reduce work-related risks, including the on-road activities of employees, so it is vital that risks arising from their van fleet are properly managed. Changes to sentencing guidelines mean companies and individuals taking risks may find themselves looking at a fine, or worse-case scenario, a custodial sentence. With the lack of regulations governing van operators, Van Excellence is an excellent method of risk management and provides the footprint for what good looks like in van operations. It is a voluntary recognition scheme for van operators which was created by the industry, for the industry.

Van Excellence is available to any van operator, they don't have to be an FTA member. Regardless of whether they have one or one thousand vans, they are a new operator or a well-established and experienced operator, a safe operation is paramount, and Van Excellence can help establish that. Van Excellence is also referenced in DVSA's Earned Recognition HGV audit standards as a recognised method of managing van operations.

Although Van Excellence is managed by FTA, the audit standards were created and are governed by the Van Excellence Governance Group which meets four times a year. The governance group consists of a group of van operators who support best practice for van operators. They are all totally committed to raising the levels of compliance and road safety and not prepared to take any short cuts, this is why they are proud to be associated with Van Excellence and willing to share best practice with like-minded operators who strive to raise the bar in the industry.

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