

# Take your journey planning up a gear

## Protecting vehicles come rain or shine

If you manage a commercial motor fleet, you'll know that journey planning is an important safety procedure. Road conditions rarely stay still, and travel related delays, incidents and accidents can all add up to real losses and extra costs. But with a bit of planning, you can reduce these risks.

### Plan ahead

- Create schedules which allow drivers enough time to stick within speed limits and avoid driving during peak hours. Make these adaptable to allow for weather, roadworks or accidents.
- Plan for breaks every 2 hours on long journeys to avoid fatigue. Don't commit to deliveries, contracts or schedules that have unrealistic time constraints.
- Make sure the route is the best one for the type of vehicle, size, manoeuvrability, parking stops, and charging points if applicable. Match the drivers experience to both the vehicle and the job.
- Use the [nzta.govt.nz](http://nzta.govt.nz) journey planner and/or 0800 4 HIGHWAYS for up-to-date traffic and road information.
- Arrange a Roadside Assist membership for all company vehicles if you haven't already.



### Be roadworthy

- Ensure your vehicles are regularly serviced and maintained to the manufacturers' specifications and always roadworthy.
- Don't forget to check condition of tyres – are they in good condition, suitable for the load and road conditions? This is especially important if you have imported vehicles where the tread pattern may not be suited to New Zealand roads.
- Fit a full-sized spare wheel – the best option for travelling long distances. A space saver should only be used for short distances at low speeds. (Your drivers should be made aware of the limitations of space saver tyres and how to use them).
- Equip all vehicles with a Hi-Viz jacket, a warning triangle, and a first aid kit for roadside emergencies.



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## Drive safely

- Have policies and procedures in place for drivers, including phoning ahead if they're delayed. Rearrange or cancel appointments if needed to avoid driver fatigue or speeding.
- Create safer drivers through training and education and ensure all drivers are properly licensed.
- Set easy-to-follow guidelines for drivers in the event of an accident.
- Make sure drivers are familiar with the features and controls of the vehicle they're driving. This is especially important for safety technology like adaptive cruise control, lane departure warning, lane keeping assist, and blind spot indicators.
- Ensure that drivers clearly understand the fuel type to be used in the vehicle.
- Be aware that some medications affect ability to drive – have a process to manage this with your staff.
- Consider implementing a drug and alcohol testing policy.
- Set clear expectations about in-vehicle distractions, such as eating while driving, wearing headphones, overly loud music, and the use of mobile phones.
- Ensure drivers pre-set electronic devices such as hands-free or map navigations before departure.
- Park in a well-lit area, preferably in a designated parking bay. Reverse into the bay where possible as there is a greater chance of an accident when reversing out than in.
- Keep personal belongings, business equipment and trade tools out of site so you don't tempt thieves.

## Stay aware

- Be on the lookout for animals on roads especially in rural areas or around farms. Dawn and dusk are more dangerous times to drive because light levels can make visibility poor.
- Use main routes where possible to avoid poor road surfaces and adverse cambers.
- Drive to the road and weather conditions and be prepared for adverse weather. In areas where snow is likely, carry snow chains, snow shovel, blankets and food and water.
- Never attempt to drive through floodwater. Plan an alternative route if you're traveling to or through an area which has recently experienced flooding.
- Clean the windscreen inside and out before starting your journey, and ensure water reservoirs are full.
- Observe black ice warnings on the vehicle or road signs and adjust your speed accordingly.

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