



## The issues

■ **Blind spots.** Every professional driver should know to check their nearside frequently and whenever turning left or going round roundabouts. It is important to remember the particular blind spots beneath the nearside door and in front of the cab, especially on the nearside. This is particularly relevant in terms of cyclist and pedestrians in urban areas, where cyclists often cycle up the inside of vehicles and pedestrians may step into the road unseen. Remember also the very wide blind area for an articulated vehicle after it has swung right to turn left.

Drivers should be reminded to check that all their mirrors are accurately set. The mirrors which have no electronic operation tend to be the most critical in terms of VRUs.

■ **Driver's daily walk-around check.** This must be properly documented and audited, in order to ensure optimum safety and to protect both the operator and the driver should an incident occur. The walk-around should include checks on any additional safety equipment which has been fitted.

■ **Unpredictable VRU behaviour.** HGV drivers MUST make allowances for unpredictable behaviour, which can be caused by inexperience, wilfully excessive risk-taking or, for instance, having to swerve to avoid pot-holes, car drivers opening doors or other factors. HGV drivers MUST be patient at all times and MUST give VRUs a wide berth. Tolerance, patience and understanding should be amongst key words and thoughts in dealing with the demands on the professional HGV driver as all these groups have an equal right to a safe journey whether that journey is crossing the road, cycling to work, commuting or delivering goods hundreds of miles.

■ **Sudden changes in the roads.** HGV drivers should look out for, as examples: traffic calming that makes overtaking high-risk and stay back where necessary; illogical cycle lanes and those that end suddenly; bends around which a VRU may be on the road – the danger in relation to horses on rural roads is especially acute.

■ **Poor visibility.** This is especially the case at night or in bad weather, or where lighting is sub-standard. The RHA supports the Highway Code. Para 59 urges cyclists to wear highly-visible clothing, and the promotion of good quality lights and reflectors, but HGV drivers need to take account of the fact that these are very often absent.

■ **Reporting danger spots and near misses.** Companies should promote a blame-free culture in terms of near misses. This is particularly true of reporting near misses with cyclists and discussing how the risk can be minimised. Also, drivers should be encouraged to report danger spots so that there can be increased awareness and, where practicable, an alternative route can be taken.

■ **Agency, casual and temporary drivers.** Such drivers should where practicable be briefed and operate to the same standard as a firm's regular employed drivers. In the checklist below, 'drivers' refers to all drivers who drive for the company.



## Further information

HSE Guide to managing occupational road safety:  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg382.pdf>

RHA Training: Driver CPC courses including sections on VRUs: <http://www.rhaonline.co.uk/courses>

General feedback: To your area manager or to:  
[campaigning@rha.uk.net](mailto:campaigning@rha.uk.net)



## Documented risk assessment

### Issue

**Blind spots – drivers are aware**

Comments .....

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**Blind spots – drivers aware to ensure mirrors are correctly positioned**

Comments .....

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**Daily walkround check, documented and audited**

Comments .....

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**Unpredictable behaviour – drivers are aware**

Comments .....

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**Sudden changes in the roads – drivers are aware**

Comments .....

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**Poor visibility – drivers are aware**

Comments .....

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**Reporting and discussion – drivers have the opportunity to report near misses and danger spots  
and to discuss VRU issues**

Comments .....

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For more information  
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