# Operational Policy: Safe Driving (NAG 5)

## Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ

## Statement of Intent:

The Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ (BLENNZ) is committed to ensuring that it will take all practicable steps to promote a safe driving culture within the organisation. It will do this by:

* ensuring that staff who drive vehicles in the course of their work demonstrate safe, efficient driving skills and other good road safety habits at all times
* maintaining all BLENNZ vehicles (leased and owned) in a safe, clean and roadworthy condition to ensure the maximum safety of drivers, occupants and other road users.

This policy covers all vehicles used for BLENNZ work purposes including BLENNZ owned or leased vehicles, rental vehicles and personally owned vehicles.

## Policy Requirements:

### Responsibilities of BLENNZ:

1. To provide a thorough induction to BLENNZ’s use of vehicles policies and procedures.

2. To provide staff with options to undertake driver training and education through:

* staff meetings to discuss driving issues to help develop and maintain a road safety culture (this includes topics such as using seat belts, car seats, combating fatigue, driver responsibility, drink-driving and fuel-efficient driving)
* driver assessment courses where there are concerns (40-minute driving sessions, carried out by a Land Transport NZ-approved driving instructor, to assess a driver’s hazard identification and search, control and traffic observation skills)
* following up on any assessment and training requirements and programmes recommended as a result of a driver assessment course
* ensuring all staff using BLENNZ or personal owned vehicles in the course of their work hold a current driver’s licence for the class of vehicle they are driving and that this has been sighted by their respective manager, a copy is held on their personnel file, and details of licence expiry are kept on the appropriate database
* maintaining a register of accidents/incidents/infringements so that regular analysis can occur.

3. To ensure both the driver and their vehicle are safe when they are using their own vehicle for work. As such the same policies and procedures apply for staff using non BLENNZ owned or leased vehicles.

4. To provide additional insurance for private vehicles that can be accessed should a staff member have an accident in their own vehicle whilst on work duties and their own insurance company will not settle the claim.

Note: If additional insurance cover needs to be accessed, this is restricted to the cover that the staff member’s private motor vehicle policy covers e.g

1. Full Comprehensive
2. Third Party and Theft
3. Third Party

5. To only purchase or lease vehicles that rate four or more stars on the ANCAP (Australasian New Car Assessment Programme) tests.

6. Where possible only choose vehicles with ESC (Electronic Stability Control), ABS brakes and side head-protecting airbags.

7. Where possible only purchase, lease or hire vehicles that are light coloured.

8. Ensure all BLENNZ vehicles have a first aid kit, reflective vest, torch, emergency triangle and civil defence survival kit. For ease of access the reflective vest should be in an easily accessible place e.g. in the glove box.

9. Ensure all BLENNZ owned and leased vehicles are well maintained and that the equipment promotes driver, operator and passenger safety by:

* servicing the vehicles according to manufacturer’s recommendations
* setting up procedures where the Manager is responsible for ensuring vehicles are checked on a monthly basis and inspections recorded. In the case of lease vehicles photographs must be taken to record evidence of the condition of the vehicle (e.g bumpers, wheel trims, scratches, dents and chips to windscreens). These must be stored on group drive/lease vehicles/vehicle inspections/VRC. This can be delegated by the Manager to another member of staff.
* keep maintenance schedules in the glove boxes of all vehicles, which are completed each time the vehicles are serviced in any way
* follow the maintenance schedules in the vehicles’ manuals
* setting up a procedure to identify and rectify faults as soon as practicable.

10. Collect and collate statistics on incidents, crashes and their causes including:

* the number of crashes
* who was thought to be at fault
* the probable causes of the crashes and other contributors, such as unrealistic work schedules
* the financial cost of all crashes
* the number of prosecutions
* the number of reported near-miss events
* other costs such as ACC compensation claims and temporary workers.

11. Monitor and manage work schedules to ensure they do not encourage unsafe driving practices by:

* requiring drivers to take regular and adequate rest breaks of no less than 10 minutes for every 2 hours of driving.

12. Require staff to keep driving logs/mileage sheets that are regularly checked by the appropriate manager (this is also a requirement for Inland Revenue purposes).

13. Encourage safe driving behaviour by:

* not paying staff speeding or other infringement fines
* forbidding the use of non hands-free mobile phones in vehicles while driving unless this is required to contact emergency services and it is unsafe or impracticable to stop the vehicle to make the call
* providing food and non alcoholic drinks at work functions
* encouraging the use of taxis or designated drivers to and from work social events.

### Responsibility of Drivers

1. To immediately notify their manager if their driver’s licence has been suspended or cancelled or has had limitations placed upon it.

2. To be responsible and accountable for their actions when operating vehicles.

3. To display the highest level of professional conduct when driving vehicles.

4. To assess hazards while driving and anticipate “what if” scenarios.

5. To drive within the legal speed limits, including driving for the conditions.

6. To wear a seat belt at all times.

7. Only use cell phones in accordance with the law.

8. To report vehicle defects to their manager before the next vehicle use.

9. To comply with traffic legislation.

10. To never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including prescription and over the counter medication if they cause drowsiness.

11. To avoid distraction when driving, before setting off the driver will visually check the car tyres for pressure and adjust car stereos, mirrors etc before setting off

12. If in an accident, complete the appropriate BLENNZ motor vehicle accident form and the vehicle insurance claim form

13. Not carry loads for which the vehicle is unsuited, nor may they carry more passengers than for whom there are seat belts

14. Report infringements received whilst driving their vehicle for work related purposes at the earliest opportunity.

15. Plan their journey, taking into account pre-journey work duties, length of the trip and post journey commitments.

16. During long journeys share driving duties with other BLENNZ staff if available. If another driver is not available stopping overnight should be considered in terms of the health and safety of both the driver and others on the road if the period of the trip exceeds 8 hours duration.

17. To not drive any vehicle in conditions for which it was not designed.

18. To not drive in marginal weather conditions. This is especially important in areas of the country which are susceptible to conditions such as ice and snow which can make driving unsafe. If these conditions are a possibility chains must be carried in the boot for emergency situations. Where appropriate, drivers must have undergone instruction in the correct use of chains on vehicles.

19. If using a private vehicle, ensure that it is legally registered, warranted and insured (the employee must show evidence of this on request). Refer BLENNZ Responsibilities (4).

20. Use daytime running lights on the open road where these are available.

### Instructions for the Cell Phone Use:

Cell phones can cause distraction in a number of ways including:

* taking hands off the wheel
* taking eyes off the road
* becoming engrossed in an intense conversation and not concentrating on the road.

Hands-free means using a hands-free phone kit or Bluetooth connectivity which allows the audio system to connect to the phone directly. You must not hold the phone while driving. However it is legal to make, receive or end a call if the phone is secured in a mounting bracket, or if the controls to answer the phone are part of the car steering wheel or dashboard.

It is BLENNZ policy that the use of hands-free must be kept to a minimum as talking hands-free still increases the risk of having an accident than if not talking on the phone at all. If using hands-free the following practices should be adopted:

* keep cell phone use to an absolute minimum when driving (e.g. divert to voicemail and check messages regularly when it is safe to pull over)
* Do not make calls, dial numbers, or text message while driving as this could result in you taking your eyes off the road
* Pull over to the side of the road when it is safe, before making or answering a call.

**“Drivers can use a mobile phone to make a call while driving only if it is an emergency situation and unsafe or impracticable to stop the vehicle to make the call**”( [Link to NZ Police - Driving Rules and Regulations](http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/driving-and-road-safety/driving-rules-and-legislation) ).

### What to do if there is a crash in a BLENNZ vehicle:

If you are involved in a crash while driving and you are not badly injured, the first thing you must do is stop and check to see if anyone is hurt. Immediately stop your vehicle at the scene or as close to it as possible, making sure you are not obstructing traffic.

Ensure your own safety first. Help any injured people and call for assistance if needed. Try to get the following information:

* Details of the other vehicle(s) and registration number(s) – photographic evidence if possible
* Name and address of the other vehicle owner(s) and driver(s)
* Name and address of any witness(es)
* Name of insurer(s).

Give the following information:

* Your name and address and BLENNZ details
* If you damage another vehicle that is unattended, leave a note on the vehicle with your contact details
* Do not admit liability. Liability is determined by the Insurance Company and the Courts.

Contact the police:

* If there are any injuries
* If there is a disagreement over the cause of the crash
* If you damage property other than your own
* If damage to the vehicle looks to be more than $2,500, report it to the police station nearest to the crash as soon as possible.

Follow-up:

Report the incident to the appropriate line manager.

### Code of Conduct:

Whilst undertaking work duties using BLENNZ owned, leased, rented or personally owned vehicles, staff must comply with traffic legislation, be conscious of road safety and demonstrate safe driving and other good road safety. The following actions whilst performing work duties will be viewed as serious breaches of conduct and dismissal may be a consequence:

1. Drinking or being under the influence of drugs while driving.

2. Driving while disqualified or not correctly licensed.

3. Reckless or dangerous driving causing death or injury.

4. Failing to stop after a crash.

4. Acquiring demerit points leading to suspension of licence.

5. Any actions that warrant the suspension of a licence.

## Supporting Documents:

BLENNZ Operational Policy: Use of Vehicles by BLENNZ Staff

[Link to NZ Police - Driving Rules and Regulations](http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/driving-and-road-safety/driving-rules-and-legislation)

[Link to NZ Transport Authority (NZTA): Safe Driving](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/safety/driving-safely/)

[Link to driving test questions relating to use of cell phones](http://www.drivingtests.co.nz/roadcode-questions/car/behaviour/are-you-allowed-to-talk-on-a-cellphone-w/)

[Link to Automobile Association (AA) Safe Driving Policy](http://www.aa.co.nz/drivers/driver-training-for-fleets-and-businesses/safe-driving-policy/)

Approved: 

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