

**WE CARE,  
DO YOU?**



Community  
Transport  
Association



**Training your drivers**

## > Why do I need to train my drivers?

The Health and Safety Executive now regards driving as one of the most dangerous regular activities that most people do. Statistically, working as a driver is almost as dangerous as being a deep sea fisherman or working in a quarry, and more dangerous than working in the construction industry.

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, organisations have a responsibility to provide information, instruction, training and supervision to all their staff, and a responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of everyone affected by the organisation. This is further endorsed under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, which also place a duty on organisations to provide appropriate training to staff.

So there is a clear, legal, obligation to ensure your drivers are trained.

## > What are the benefits of training my drivers?

Besides the obvious legal requirements there are other benefits, not only to your organisation but also to your drivers and passengers. Trained drivers will drive your vehicles in a more sympathetic manner, thus helping to reduce maintenance and fuel costs. They will have fewer accidents, resulting in lower insurance premiums and less “down-time” of vehicles. The skills they learn during training can be transferred to their own vehicles, with the same potential reduction in running costs. Perhaps the most significant benefit of all is to your passengers, who will be transported in a safe and comfortable manner.

So there are far more reasons for

training than simply because the law says you have to.

## > I can see that I need to train paid staff, but what about volunteers?

In the publication *Charity and Voluntary Workers: A Guide to Health and Safety at Work*, the Health and Safety Executive states: “In general, the same health and safety standards should be applied to voluntary workers as they would to employees exposed to the same risks.”

There may not be strict legal duties but the implication from this statement is clear, you should offer the same level of training to a volunteer driver as you would to a paid one.

There are also other reasons for training volunteers, not least of which is making them feel a valuable part of the team by receiving the same training as other staff members. You may also find it easier to recruit, as potential volunteers are more likely to come to an organisation that obviously cares about its voluntary staff, and of course, you may find it easier to hang on to them once you've got them!

## > OK, so I need to train all my drivers, what should I do?

The simple solution to your driver training needs is to join MiDAS.

MiDAS is the award-winning\* Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme, organised by the CTA. MiDAS is a nationally recognised standard for the assessment and training of drivers. It is a membership scheme, which is free to join, that has been designed to enhance driving standards and promote the safe operation of these vehicles. It is a membership scheme,





free to join, designed to enhance driving standards and promote the safe operation of minibuses.

*\* In 2003, MiDAS won a National Training Award*

### > Who is MiDAS aimed at?

MiDAS is applicable to any organisation that transports passengers by road, and member organisations range from small voluntary organisations operating one vehicle to local authorities operating large vehicle fleets. Many schools and other educational establishments are members and in its guidance to schools using minibuses, the Department for Education and Skills cites MiDAS training as good practice for all schools.

Don't worry if you haven't got a vehicle, you can still join MiDAS and have anyone who will be driving for your organisation trained.

### > How does MiDAS work?

MiDAS operates on a "cascade" approach, with a number of CTA-appointed Training Agents providing training for minibus Driver Assessor Trainers (DATs) or Driver Observers who then deliver training to drivers.

If you do not want your own trainer, you can approach another MiDAS member to train your drivers for you. Or, if you wish, you can approach a Training Agent to deliver training directly to your drivers.

Whichever way you choose, your drivers will receive the same level of training and you will have the option of purchasing a comprehensive *Minibus Driver's Handbook* or a *Car & MPV Driver's Handbook*.

You will find a full list of Training Agents and their contact details on the MiDAS page

of the CTA website: **[www.ctauk.org](http://www.ctauk.org)**. Or if you would like a list of DATs in your area email: **[MiDAS@ctauk.org](mailto:MiDAS@ctauk.org)**

### > What does MiDAS training include?

Under MiDAS, drivers attend an intensive classroom-based theory training session that looks at:

- > Defensive driving
- > Drivers' legal responsibilities
- > Passenger safety
- > Health and safety awareness
- > Manual handling awareness
- > Personal safety for drivers
- > Collision and breakdown procedures.

They also undertake an extensive, on-road assessment of their driving skills and a written, multiple-choice theory assessment before being awarded a certificate.

Drivers of accessible vehicles undertake further training in the skills and knowledge they require to safely use an accessib

le vehicle and they must successfully complete a practical skills assessment before being issued with their certificate.

### > What makes MiDAS different to other driver training schemes?

The extensive network of MiDAS trainers means that it is readily available throughout the UK. But the significant difference from the majority of training schemes is that it is not simply a one-off course and test. MiDAS has a four-year refresher cycle, drivers must attend refresher training (including another on-road assessment) every four years in order to retain their entitlement. This not only means that their driving skills are maintained but that they

are also fully equipped with the latest information on legal and safety issues.

In order to maintain their level of skills, knowledge and training entitlements, Training Agents and DATs are required to attend refresher training every two years.

### > **MiDAS is just what I am looking for. How do I join?**

As mentioned previously in this brochure, MiDAS is free to join. A membership application form can be downloaded from the MiDAS page of the CTA website, or alternatively you can request one by email. Once your application has been processed you will be issued with a membership number and you will need to quote this number every time you access MiDAS training or materials.

On joining you make a commitment to assess and train all new drivers of your vehicles from the date you join and all existing drivers within a 12-month period.

### > **What if my drivers are already trained?**

If you have an existing driver training programme but would now like to commit to MiDAS, you can apply for an exemption from training your existing drivers. If you wish to do this you can request an exemption form by emailing MiDAS. You will be asked to detail the training your drivers have received.

Exemptions are at the discretion of MiDAS and cannot be guaranteed. They only exempt your existing drivers from initial MiDAS training. Although you will be able to issue exempted drivers with certificates, they will have to attend refresher training in order to maintain their entitlement.

### **Find out more about MiDAS:**

- > on the MiDAS page of the CTA website **www.ctauk.org**
- > **email** MiDAS@ctauk.org
- > or **telephone** 08707 743586



Supports the CTA & MiDAS  
[www.qstraint.com](http://www.qstraint.com)



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**Email:** MiDAS@ctauk.org

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# Are you a member of CTA UK?



If not, here are **10 good reasons to join:**



The CTA is our first contact for all community transport enquiries. They have been instrumental in all our successes from day one and have provided guidance every step of the way



**Buchan Dial-a-Community Bus**

- 1 Reduced rates for entry to the UK's largest Community and Voluntary Transport Event
- 2 Cheaper insurance premiums for minibus operators through CTA Insurance
- 3 Discounts on the purchase of a range of new vehicles
- 4 Free subscription to CTA Journal, the UK's leading publication for everyone involved in community and voluntary transport, published six times a year
- 5 Discounts on all CTA publications
- 6 Extensive training programme tailored to the needs of voluntary and community transport operators
- 7 Unlimited advice and information on a wide range of legal and technical issues
- 8 CTA can issue Section 19 permits and undertake CRB screening exclusively for members
- 9 Opportunities for networking and sharing experiences
- 10 Ensure that your views are represented at all levels of government

**To find out more about the benefits of joining the CTA, call our membership team now on 08707 743586**



**Community  
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