



London Ambulance Service **NHS**
NHS Trust

Driving Standards Policy and Procedure

DOCUMENT PROFILE and CONTROL.

Purpose of the document: The purpose of this policy and procedure is to highlight key aspects of driving and vehicle care which, if followed carefully, will help in reducing the risk to our staff, patients and other road users, as well as minimising the damage to Trust vehicles.

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Links to Related documents or references providing additional information		
Ref. No.	Title	Version
N/A	IHCD Ambulance Driving Manual	
ISBN 9780115528149	The Official Highway Code Book	
https://www.gov.uk/highway-code/contents	The Highway Code On Line	
N/A	Road Safety Act 2006	
OP/057	CRU Rider Handbook	1.0
OP/056	MRU Rider Handbook	1.0
LAS MIP	LAS Major Incident Plan	
OP/009	Procedure for Attendance at Calls on the Croydon Tramlink	
TP/067	Procedure for Road Traffic Collision, Reporting, Investigation and Adjudication	1.1
TP/063	Checking of Driving Licences Guidance for Managers	21
TP/064	NIP/PCN Policy and Procedure	2.1
TP/067	Procedure for Road Traffic Collision Reporting, Investigation and Adjudication	2.2
	Motor Risk Management Guidance Notes for Managers	
TP/068	Statutory Vehicle Checks Incorporating Pre and Post Shift Arrangements	2.1
TP/091	Out of Service Policy	2.0
TP/035	Risk Reporting and Assessment Procedure	3.6
TP/005	Risk Management Policy	7.4

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to promote the highest standards of driving conduct within the London Ambulance Service NHS Trust (LAS). The manner in which Trust vehicles are driven has a direct bearing on the public's perception of the LAS as a professional organisation. All staff must therefore strive to safeguard the Trust's reputation by displaying high standards of driving and road behaviour at all times.
- 1.2 In addition to ensuring compliance with Road Traffic Law, all staff have a duty to protect the safety and wellbeing of other staff, patients, passengers and other road users.
- 1.3 Drivers of Trust vehicles must adhere to the level of training and standards commensurate with their role. This includes maintaining a thorough working knowledge of the Highway Code, appropriate current supporting training and education material, policies, procedures, bulletins and information that is circulated within the organisation via the corporate communications system, the weekly Routine Information Bulletin.
- 1.4 All staff, whether driving or not, when approaching and parking at incidents should ensure a suitable and sufficient dynamic risk assessment is undertaken.
- 1.5 Emergency driving is a privileged skill underpinned by advanced training and assessment. With this privilege comes significant personal responsibility. Failure to act in accordance with the provided training or compliance with policy or procedure can result in internal disciplinary action by the Trust and legal proceedings against both the individual and the Trust. All staff should be aware of the implications of prosecution and the potential effect on their liberty in serious cases.
- 1.6 All drivers need to be aware that the consequences of actions and non-compliance to the provided training and/or policy, procedure and bulletins can lead to serious injury or death of staff or others.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all authorised drivers of LAS vehicles. Vehicles may include those that are owned, hired, leased or borrowed.

3. Objectives

- 3.1 To provide guidance to all drivers in support of their legal and professional responsibilities in driving on LAS business and when claiming legal exemptions.
- 3.2 To ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff, patients, passengers and other road users.

3.3 To maintain a framework in which the Trust can measure and monitor the standards of driving of those persons authorised to drive on LAS business.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 All authorised persons who drive on LAS business are responsible for complying with current Road Traffic Law, driver training and educational material, LAS driving policies, procedures and bulletins at all times. It remains the sole discretion of the driver which exemptions they will utilise ensuring safety at all times.

4.2 Line managers are responsible for overseeing compliance with this policy.

4.3 The Motor Risk Group is responsible for developing the strategic direction of driving related projects and initiatives, as well as monitoring the outcomes from current motor risk activity and data collection sources. The Group reports to the Executive Leadership Team on a regular basis.

4.4 All members of staff are expected to challenge unacceptable driving behaviour or standards observed in the overall interests of maintaining the highest professional standards and safety of all concerned.

4.5 Whilst it is the driver's ultimate responsibility, all crew staff must jointly undertake a dynamic risk assessment when driving, approaching and parking at incidents.

4.6 All drivers are responsible for undertaking and recording a road worthiness check of their vehicle in accordance with TP/068 Statutory Vehicle Checks Incorporating Pre and Post Shift Arrangements.

4.7 All staff must be aware that it is an offence to cause or permit a person to use a vehicle that is not legally roadworthy.

4.8 It must be remembered at all times that no job is so urgent as to justify a collision.

5. Definitions

5.1 Throughout this document the term 'Trust vehicle' refers to all types of vehicle operated by the LAS. The terms 'driver' or 'rider' refers to all grades of staff who have been authorised to operate a Trust vehicle.

5.2 An authorised driver is any person who is driving or riding any vehicle operating on Trust business with the permission and knowledge of their line manager.

5.3 A dynamic risk assessment can be defined as: *"The continuous process of identifying hazards, assessing risk, taking action to eliminate or reduce risk, monitoring and reviewing in the rapidly changing circumstances of an operational incident."*

6. General Procedures

6.1. Authorisation to drive LAS Vehicles

- 6.1.1. Staff are responsible for ensuring that they have a valid driving licence for the category of vehicle that they are required to drive. Staff should keep their licence available for inspection at all times and where required by a manager should produce this on request and normally within 24hours. (Please refer to TP/063 'Checking of Driving Licences – Guidance for Managers).
- 6.1.2. All drivers of Trust vehicles must undertake the relevant driver training or assessment for the type of vehicle they are required to drive in line with current driver training strategy.
- 6.1.3. Staff must inform their line manager as soon as is reasonably practicable if they are involved in any driving related matter either in or out of work in which the police are involved.
- 6.1.4. Staff must inform their line manager of any health reason that may affect their ability or authority to drive a Trust vehicle.
- 6.1.5. Attention is drawn to Human Resource Policy HR/015 – Alcohol, Drugs & Solvent Misuse Policy. It is essential that all staff are fully familiar with its content, and that any issues or concerns in respect of compliance are reported immediately to a manager.

6.2. Penalty Points and Driving Convictions

- 6.2.1. Any staff receiving penalty points or notices of intended prosecution must notify their line manager as soon as possible, and in any event before undertaking any driving duties.
- 6.2.2. Should a driver hold a licence that is endorsed with 6 or more penalty points, the Trust will manage that situation according to potential risks. This may involve suspension of driving duties.
- 6.2.3. Should a driver receive a driving ban, or be convicted of a serious driving offence such as driving without due care and attention, or dangerous driving then the Disciplinary process will be actioned.
- 6.2.4. Should a Notice of Intended Prosecution be received that is likely to put the member of staff in one of the positions above, consideration must be given to suspend driving duties.

6.3. Medical Requirements

6.3.1. All Trust drivers engaging on emergency driving activities must meet the Group 2 requirements outlined within the DVLA publication *Assessing fitness to drive*.

6.4. Vision (Spectacles/Contact Lenses/Sunglasses)

6.4.1. All Trust drivers must ensure that their vision meets with the legal requirement at all times. This is specified in the Highway Code (Rule 92) and drivers are strongly encouraged to have regular eyesight tests (every two years at least) to help maintain this requirement. Drivers who need to wear spectacles or contact lenses for driving must do so at all times when driving and must carry a spare pair of spectacles when on duty.

6.4.2. In accordance with Rule 94 of the Highway Code, sunglasses/tinted spectacles may only be worn during bright sunlight. The wearing of such spectacles could be dangerous in other conditions, due to the reduction of vision and subsequent risk of not observing another road user, for example pedestrian or bicycle.

6.4.3. Drivers who use tinted prescription spectacles to correct vision must also carry a pair of spectacles with clear lenses in case weather conditions change during the period of duty.

6.4.4. Spectacles and/or Sunglasses should be of a colour and style in keeping with the professional image of the LAS.

6.5. Consumption of Food and Drink in LAS Vehicles

6.5.1. The consumption of food and drink within a Trust vehicle is strictly prohibited whilst that vehicle is in motion (with the exception of a cold drink from a suitable self-contained vessel by the attendant).

6.5.2. Food and drink must not be consumed in any patient bearing area of a Trust vehicle at any time. The consumption of food and drink in non-patient bearing areas whilst stationary is permitted, although the vehicle should be discretely parked away from public view as far as is reasonably possible. Strong smelling food should be routinely avoided for the comfort of patients and colleagues.

6.5.3. The LAS may make a special provision for staff with diabetes where reasonable. Such staff will have individually agreed treatment plans in place, which may on occasion require some flexibility to the above procedures.

6.6. Smoking/Unauthorised Passengers & Equipment

6.6.1. Staff or permitted passengers may not smoke or use e-cigarettes in or on vehicles being used for LAS purposes.

6.6.2. The carriage of any unauthorised passenger, equipment or other items is not permitted.

6.6.3. Observers must have in place an observer agreement (see TP/024) or other written agreement from a manager of the Trust. Crew staff should ensure familiarity with their responsibilities within this policy.

6.7. Wearing of Seat Belts/Restraints for Patients, Escorts and Attendant

6.7.1. Drivers and all passengers (including the attendant), are required by law to wear front seat belts in all types of Trust vehicle. The same rule applies to rear seat belts in cars, and those in small minibus vehicles (i.e. an unladen weight of less than 2540kg).

6.7.2. There are three exemptions:

- If you are driving a vehicle and are carrying out a manoeuvre at low speed which includes reversing.
- If you have a valid medical exemption certificate.
- If your seat belt has become defective on your journey, and you are en-route for subsequent repair at a workshop nominated by the Out of Service Hub. Should the front passenger belt be defective, the attendant or passenger should travel in another seat with a working seat belt for this journey. If the driver seat belt is faulty, the vehicle should be recovered.

- while the person is providing medical attention or treatment to a patient which due to its nature or the medical situation of the patient cannot be delayed

6.7.3. In order to give maximum protection to patients and escorts whilst in a Trust vehicle, every effort must be made to persuade them to use a seat belt / trolley straps. Patients and escorts who decline the offer should have their attention drawn to the notice displayed. If they still decline, a reference to this must be recorded on the Patient Report Form (PRF) or Patient Transport Service 1 (PTS1) sheet or LA1, and wherever possible a signature obtained.

6.7.4. The driver must be aware of any instance when a patient or escort declines the wearing of a seat belt after the steps identified in 6.5.3 above have been followed. Where appropriate to reduce the risk, consideration should be given to decline or aid the alternative transportation of an escort.

6.7.5. Attendants must wear a seat belt in the rear of an ambulance, unless to do so would hinder their ability to care for the patient. Where this is not worn, the driver must be informed.

6.8. Securing of Vehicle Doors

- 6.8.1. Vehicle doors must be properly fastened to ensure they do not open whilst the vehicle is in motion. Ambulance bodies are constructed on the basis that the communication door will be closed whilst the vehicle is moving for the added safety of crews in the event of a collision. Equipment must be properly secured and stowed to avoid injury to staff and passengers.
- 6.8.2. A Trust vehicle may not be driven with any doors open.
- 6.8.3. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the rear/side steps and tail-lift/ramp are safely stowed or suitably secured and that all doors are closed before moving off.
- 6.8.4. Where a door becomes defective whilst in use, it may be appropriate to temporarily secure it to undertake a journey to a place of repair and appropriate assessment of risk to staff and other road users should be undertaken.
- 6.8.5. The vehicle must remain locked when unattended (with the exception of a Major Incident where the circumstances dictate).

6.9. Use of MDT

- 6.9.1. Drivers must not interact with the MDT whilst driving. The MDT can be used for accepting a job or as a navigation device, only if it is safe to do so. Other operation of the MDT is prohibited by Law.
- 6.9.2. Driving whilst reading from the MDT carries a significant risk and must be avoided. For that reason, the MDT should only be operated by the attendant whilst the vehicle is in operation.
- 6.9.3. Should the driver need to interact with the device, they must first find somewhere safe to park.

6.10. Use of Radio

- 6.10.1. Service drivers must only use the communication devices in the vehicle when safe to do so. Whenever possible, the attendant should use the radio.
- 6.10.2. For the driver, the radio must only be operated using the push to talk button and not by a fist mic nor by holding the device. It should be noted that holding the radio may lead to a prosecution for the same offence as using a mobile phone, or driving not in proper control of a vehicle.

6.11. Bus Lanes and Cycle Lanes/Superhighways

6.11.1. Drivers are permitted to use bus lanes for Ambulance Purposes and in accordance with any local arrangements. It will be for the driver to justify their Ambulance Purpose.

6.11.2. Generally, when engaged on an emergency call a vehicle can be driven, with care, in a bus lane. When not engaged on a call, driving in bus lanes should be avoided.

6.12. Cycle Lanes/Superhighways

6.12.1. Section 21 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 the exemption in 2(A) is given as *“for the purpose of saving life, or extinguishing fire or meeting any other like emergency”*.

6.12.2. It is important to note here that the wording is stronger than from where our more conventional driving exemptions, such as speed, originate from (defined simply as “for Ambulance Purposes” – which has a far broader scope for utilisation). This means cycle lanes of all types can be generally legally used when attending a Cat 1 or 2 call, but not usually when conveying, nor attending lower graded calls.

6.12.3. Should a driver choose to use a cycle lane/superhighway it is essential to remember that many cyclists may not expect the presence of a vehicle, there are many junctions and crossing points with limited vision and often physical segregation from the main carriageway is often present.

6.12.4. For these reasons, use of cycle lanes/superhighway should be done with extreme care.

6.13. Positioning of Vehicle at an Incident

6.13.1. It is recognised that a sufficient and adequate dynamic risk assessment will ultimately inform the right course of action. Every situation cannot be prescribed for. The early stages of any incident, especially on multi-lane or fast roads can be especially hazardous. In some cases, the situation until made safe may mean progressing to provide patient care must wait. Dynamic risk assessments will need to remain constant due to the changing surrounding conditions.

6.13.2. The broad principles of ‘to fend off or apply other safe parking options’ are informed by;

- a) Being the first vehicle on scene and needing to protect the safety of responders, patients and other road users.
- b) The adequacy of a safe working environment having been created to undertake patient care.

6.13.3. When parking, it should be noted that the laws of physics will cause a struck vehicle to continue in the direction that it is being forced, irrespective of how wheels may have been turned. Therefore, consideration of adequate safety space must be of paramount consideration (see 11.11.3).

6.13.4. Ambulance vehicles should be moved into the 'move off' position before loading when the scene has been determined safe to do so.

6.13.5. If fending off is not required, then all efforts should be made to drive beyond the incident to a safe position as shown in appendix 1.

6.13.6. Once loaded, responding staff should give consideration to moving to a more appropriate place to continue assessment and treatment rather than remain parked on scene where the dynamic risk assessment suggests an increased risk.

6.14. Fending Off

6.14.1. Safety at the scene of an incident on the road is a primary responsibility. The term fending off describes the positioning of a vehicle prior to an incident with the aim of providing essential safety to a scene that is not otherwise protected and involves blocking of lanes. Diagrams in Appendix 1 aid the illustration of this point. Fending off is a consideration with a dynamic risk assessment. The need to re-assess will remain constant until full control is taken by the Police and / or Highways Agency. It is important within this assessment to consider the emergency light coverage through vehicle positioning and the impact of a total carriageway blockage on both traffic flow and scene access by other responders.

6.14.2. Appendix 1 shows a number of examples of fending off and explains the considerations for responding crew.

6.14.3. If the first arriving vehicle, you should stop about 25 meters prior to the incident to allow space for other emergency vehicles to position when they arrive. Consider how emergency lights will be seen by other road users when positioning. Consider how and where other road users have stopped to provide help and how they may choose to leave changing the dynamics of the safety put in place.

6.14.4. Where possible and appropriate on fast roads and motorways, attempt to work from the hard shoulder side of the road.

6.14.5. Fending off to protect the lane that you are working in and try and provide one additional lane of closure to act as a buffer between the incident and moving traffic.

6.14.6. Avoid creating an 'island' where moving traffic can pass you on either side.

6.14.7. Avoid attempting to extricate patients until adequate protection is in place unless the situation poses an immediate threat to life.

7. Non-Emergency Driving Procedures

- 7.1 Patient Transport Staff (PTS) and other non-emergency staff are not permitted to claim any exemption afforded to emergency vehicles, other than those relating to 'stopping' and 'parking' as defined in other relevant documentation. The circumstances must dictate that no other legal stopping/parking alternative was available, and that the exemption can be claimed safely with all due consideration to other road users.

8. Emergency Driving Procedures

- 8.1 The over-riding priority in all driving situations is the safety of staff, patients, passengers and other road users. It is essential that ambulance vehicles are driven at a speed where the vehicle can be stopped within the driver's range of vision. Speed must be conducive to the prevailing road, weather and traffic conditions existing at the time. The speed must be compatible with the patient's condition and that allows the attendant to safely provide the appropriate level of care.
- 8.2 On receipt of a call requiring an emergency driving response, the crew will immediately progress to the given location by the quickest route available using appropriate visual warnings devices, together with audible warning devices as considered necessary. The route will normally be pre-selected by the satellite navigation system, although staff can apply local knowledge and judgement in avoiding matters such as road-works and known traffic delays. In cases where a pre-selected route is not available through an electronic system the driver will establish the most direct route using a map book. Where appropriate the attendant should provide the navigation guidance.
- 8.3 Except when on emergency calls, drivers are bound by the restrictions on waiting, sounding of audible warning devices and positioning on the road when stationary. An ambulance is only exempt from such regulations if conformity would hinder its use for its intended purpose. Where no exemption applies and the driver incurs parking fines, a fixed penalty notice and/or a summons, it will be their responsibility to address these and resolve the matter with their line manager. All staff are reminded that they must declare all such matters. The Trust will not cover the cost of any financial penalties that are incurred in this regard. More details are contained within *TP/064 NIP/PCN Policy and Procedure*.
- 8.4 In the interests of both safety and legal requirements, drivers should not normally use a hand held device, which is not docked in a suitable carrier mounted in the vehicle. This includes the use of mobile phones, mobile data terminal (MDT) and navigation systems whilst driving or manoeuvring a vehicle. The wearing of headphones or earpieces, other than those connected to an airwave radio, must not be used when driving Trust vehicles.

9. Audible and Visual Warnings

- 9.1. Visual warnings (blue lights) and flashing headlights (wig-wags) should be used when responding to all calls requiring an emergency driving response. Such a call can be defined as a call originating from a 999 call; a call from another health care professional or a call appropriately authorised and made in connection with ambulance purposes. Audible and visual warnings may also be used when conveying a patient to hospital where the patient's condition justifies their application. The use of audible warnings is permitted throughout the 24 hour period and may be used at the driver's discretion. Wig – Wags must NOT be used when lighting conditions require the use of headlights.
- 9.2. Drivers should ensure that audible warning devices are activated in good time to help, warn or inform other road users and give them adequate time to react.
- 9.3. In situations where it is evident that passage cannot be safely gained through, sirens may be turned off to avoid causing other road users to feel intimidated or panicked.
- 9.4. Unnecessary use of audible warning devices, especially at night can cause disturbance to the public. However the most overriding decision when using them is to achieve progress and arrive safely at an incident.
- 9.5. Use of audible warning devices whilst en route to hospitals may not ease the feelings or condition of a conscious patient and it will be particularly important to reassure the patient when they need to be used.
- 9.6. Audible and visual warnings are not to be used when routinely returning to the base station.
- 9.7. Drivers must be actively aware of the differing responses likely to be expected from members of the public when utilising emergency warning equipment and when not.
- 9.8. Drivers must remain mindful that the use of audible and visual warnings does not give an ambulance vehicle 'the right of way' – they merely seek to alert the public to its presence. Equally, having the right to claim an exemption does not mean it is safe to use it.
- 9.9. Drivers of emergency vehicles should be particularly mindful that despite the use of audible warning devices, drivers of other vehicles may not hear sirens etc. due to other distractions in their vehicles, such as loud noise, headphones or health problems.
- 9.10. The domestic radio must be switched off when responding to emergency calls.

- 9.11 Table 1 below sets out when audible and visual warning must be used by LAS staff and when discretion can be used by either operational or control services staff.
- 9.12 It is normal that as a call develops, the category may change. Drivers are expected to drive in accordance with the information available at the time. It remains the discretion of the driver how they respond to an incident, however in order to assist the Trust has issued the general guidance below:-

Call Category (with or without confirmed diagnosis and from any source)	Emergency Driving Response	Comments
Category 1	Yes – Anticipated	Will display as CAT 1 in the priority field on MDT screens
Category 1 where 'Easting & Northings' only are shown or where a confirmed address is still pending	Yes – Anticipated	Pre-triage 999 call taking has identified a patient known to be either not breathing or unconscious with an unstable airway Will display as CAT 1 in the priority field on MDT screens with e.g. =L(123456,123456) in the location field Resources must immediately mobilise to the approximate location under emergency driving conditions
Category 2	Yes – Anticipated	Will display as CAT 2 in the priority field on MDT screens
Category 3	Yes – Anticipated	Will display as CAT 3 in the priority field on MDT screens
Category 4	No – Though anticipated when circumstance or EOC direction suggests appropriate	Will display as CAT 4 in the priority field on MDT screens Emergency driving would normally be undertaken when: * Clinical information from EOC or the attending crew suggests this is necessary * Where road and traffic conditions would delay a reasonable response * Where exceptional operational circumstances exist
Uncategorised	No – Though anticipated when circumstance or EOC direction suggests appropriate	Will display as UNCAT or NON E in the priority field on MDT screens Resources must immediately mobilise to the approximate location under normal driving conditions - once categorised the appropriate driving response should be applied An immediate emergency response may be appropriate based on clinical information or direction from EOC

Table 1

- 9.13 Unless the vehicle is likely to be kept at an incident for an extended time, emergency warning lights should be kept on as a protection whilst stationary and the run lock feature used if the vehicle is unattended. Where parking and displaying hazard warning lights may be obstructed by another stationary vehicle and confusion created to other road users by the signal they can see, consideration should be given as to their on-going use.
- 9.14 LAS cars, and particularly Cycle Response Unit (CRU) and Motorcycle Response Units (MRU) vehicles are far less visible than ambulances, and generally do not provide the driver with the same level of vision as from an ambulance cab. So staff must constantly bear these factors in mind when responding to emergency calls.
- 9.15 Audible and visual warning devices may be used for ambulance purposes in circumstances when not assigned to a 999 emergency call, but where the balance of need is deemed reasonable and proportionate to aid the prompt and effective provision of emergency ambulance services. Such cases must be authorised by an officer of at least Incident Delivery Manager or General Manager (or nominated appropriate deputy in the case of control services) rank. Such authorisation will be recorded on the event log/decision log and must be reasonable, necessary and proportionate in the circumstances.

10. Exemptions

- 10.1 All drivers are reminded that they are obliged under the Corporate Manslaughter and Homicide Act 2007, the Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Safety Act 2006 to afford, at all times, the maximum protection to other road users and to drive with care and consideration for other road users. At no time must the vehicle be driven recklessly, or in a manner, or at a speed likely to cause danger to another road user (including those near to but not on the road).
- 10.2 Drivers are not exempt from prosecution under the Road Safety Act 2006 for offences related to driving dangerously, recklessly, without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration for other road users.
- 10.3 Exemptions can only be used claimed if the legislative standard is met, namely that *“if observance of the limit would hinder the use of the vehicle for its official purpose on that occasion”*. The driver must satisfy themselves of this prior to utilising any exemptions.
- 10.4 CRU cyclists may claim exception from the Highway Code mandatory ‘Must Not’ rules when cycling on a pavement or pedestrian area in response to an emergency call. More details can be found in the CRU handbook.

10.5 Speed

- 10.5.1 A vehicle being used for ambulance purposes may exceed any statutory speed limit (those governing roads and vehicles). The exemption may be claimed when

travelling to an emergency or on the journey to hospital providing the patient's condition can justify use of the exemption.

10.5.2 MRU riders must comply with the additional rules and procedures detailed in the MRU Handbook. In particular, the LAS have introduced specific speed limits for certain models of motor cycle, which must be observed at all times.

10.6 Negotiating Red Traffic Lights

10.6.1 Drivers have discretion to regard a red traffic light as a 'Give Way' sign rather than a 'Stop' sign when 'observance would hinder the use of the vehicle for its official purpose on that occasion'.

10.6.2 As highlighted above, the only circumstances in which this exemption can be considered are during the initial response to an emergency call, or when the patient's condition warrants the emergency transfer to a treatment facility. In either situation, emergency warning lights must be used, with the use of audible warning devices determined by the presence of other road users (including pedestrians) and if applicable, the patient's condition.

10.6.3 A 'Give Way' sign has specific legal meaning and failure to comply with that meaning is in itself an offence. The sign means do not enter the major road in such a manner as to be likely to cause danger to, or collision with, a vehicle on the major road or to cause it to change speed or course.

10.6.4 In negotiating a red traffic signal:

- Drivers **MUST** be in a position to **GIVE WAY** to **ANY** vehicle that still has right of way in or entering the junction.
- In order to do this **SPEED** should be significantly reduced, often, to a slow walking pace prior to arriving at the hazard.
- No **DECISION** is to be made to enter the junction before full **VISION** has been acquired and it can be seen that it is safe to proceed.
- Drivers must **WAIT** until all other drivers and road users have stopped or slowed to allow the ambulance vehicle precedence. LAS drivers must **NOT** force their way through and cause other road users to alter direction or speed.
- Particular care must be taken where the junction has multiple lanes to cross and vision is obscured by large vehicles.
- Always '**PLAN FOR THE WORST- DON'T HOPE FOR THE BEST**'. If in doubt hold back.

10.6.5 The degree of additional care and caution required to safely negotiate a red traffic signal cannot be overemphasised.

10.6.6 Remember the legal meaning of a 'Give Way' sign. Should a collision occur whilst crossing a red traffic signal, responsibility may rest with the Trust driver.

10.7 Pedestrian Crossings (All types)

10.7.1 The very nature of pedestrian crossings dictates that extreme caution must be exercised at all times on the approach and during the negotiation of crossings. Drivers will often be required to approach crossings at a slow walking pace, and not proceed until they are completely satisfied that any pedestrians present have observed the approaching vehicle and adopted a safe position. Drivers must then remain vigilant to any sudden or unexpected actions by pedestrians and/or other road users as the crossing is safely negotiated.

10.7.2 Due consideration should also be given to the potential of disability in pedestrians and/or other road users, particularly those affecting sight and hearing.

10.7.3 Legally, the driver must allow precedence to any pedestrian who is on any part of the crossing, and equally must not cause danger to any other vehicle approaching or waiting at the crossing.

10.7.4 Unless engaged on an emergency call all drivers of Trust vehicles must adhere to the Highway Code in relation to pedestrian crossings.

10.8 Parking within areas controlled by double white or yellow lines

10.8.1 Trust vehicles are permitted to park within the controlled area and on the crossing subject to the vehicle not remaining longer than is necessary, and/or it could not be parked effectively elsewhere. This exemption is to allow ambulance personnel to deal with the incident when no alternative parking is available. Drivers are reminded that there is no exemption for dangerous parking.

10.9 Parking on a footway, verge or central reservation (non fast roads)

10.9.1 Drivers should not park on footpaths unless absolutely necessary. Where parking needs to occur, care should be given to ensure pedestrians and wheelchair users can pass. Care should be taken when moving onto soft ground so as to not to get the vehicle stuck or to cause damage to it.

10.10 Traffic Islands – Passing on the Offside

10.10.1 There are occasions when because of traffic or an obstruction, it becomes necessary for a Trust vehicle to pass on the offside of a refuge to avoid delay when engaged on an emergency call. In these circumstances great care must be

exercised; the onus for ensuring that there is no possibility of a collision or of causing harm rests with the driver.

10.11 Roundabouts and One-way Streets

10.11.1 At all times including when on an emergency call, drivers must negotiate traffic roundabouts and one-way streets in the direction of the flow of traffic unless otherwise directed by a police officer in uniform.

10.12 Junctions where right/left turns are banned or restricted

10.12.1 There is no exemption for failing to comply with a no left or no right turn when driving under emergency conditions.

10.13 Use of bus lanes and tram link corridors during times of operation

10.13.1 All LAS A&E and PTS liveried vehicles are entitled to drive in bus lanes within the London area during their hours of operation when being used for an Ambulance Purpose. This entitlement does not extend to LAS personnel driving private or lease car vehicles, unless the lease car is booked on duty and available to respond to calls, or is responding to an emergency suitably equipped with audible and visual warnings.

10.13.2 Trust Drivers must comply with bus lanes regulations outside of the London area during their times of operation, although emergency vehicles responding to an emergency/urgent call and when conveying a patient to hospital are exempt.

10.13.3 Drivers must not use Contra-Flow Bus Lanes, unless it provides the only means of access to a call. In such cases, all due care and consideration must be given to ensuring that a clear passage exists for the vehicle to reach the call without becoming 'boxed in' or a hazard to other road users.

10.13.4 Special instructions must be followed when driving or stopping within the marked designated operating corridors of the Croydon Tramlink network. Drivers must familiarise themselves with the mandatory instructions contained in: Procedure for Attendance at Calls on the Croydon Tramlink (OP/009)

10.14 Clearways

10.14.1 Trust vehicles are permitted to stop and park on clearways, subject to it being necessary to carry out essential duties that could not be done if the vehicle were parked elsewhere. However, all drivers are reminded that no exemption exists for dangerous parking whatever the circumstances and all drivers should consider the same risks as for other fast roads.

10.14.2 Parking and leaving a vehicle unattended. Stopping the engine whilst parked is not necessary if there are good grounds for leaving it running. This should only take place where the crew are working in close proximity to the vehicle.

10.14.3 Activate the arrival mode, where fitted on the emergency light panel. This will turn off flashing headlights and activate rear red lights where fitted.

10.14.4 In some cases it may be appropriate to turn off blue lights that are pointing towards traffic on the opposite and unaffected carriageway to reduce the impacts of rubber necking or sudden changes in vehicle speeds which may lead to further incidents occurring, especially on fast roads and motorways

10.14.5 The vehicle must remain locked when unattended (with the exception of a Major Incident where the circumstances dictate).

10.14.6 Where it is necessary to leave the engine running, the use of run lock should be used where fitted. Drivers must be alert to the potential of theft of or from the vehicle if it is left out of run lock mode.

10.15 Parking on the offside of the road at night

10.15.1 You must not park on the offside of a road facing against the flow of traffic unless lit or in a recognised parking space. At night, where speed limits are above 30mph, lights must always be displayed when parking.

10.16 Audible warnings at night

10.16.1 Sirens may be used at night where deemed necessary for the safety of all road users.

10.17 Observing keep left/right signs

10.17.1 Drivers should, where possible, avoid going on the wrong side of keep left/right signs. When the decision is taken to do so, great care must be taken.

10.18 Entering a pedestrian precinct

10.18.1 Emergency vehicles may enter a pedestrian precinct when essential to provide patient care. Always consider if alternate access or parking would be appropriate to reduce risk to other road users

10.19 Non-Exemptions

10.19.1 There are no exemptions for the driver of an ambulance vehicle, even when responding to an emergency call, from the following list:

- Dangerous Driving
- Careless Driving
- Failing to stop if involved in a Road Traffic Incident
- Dangerous Parking
- Driving without wearing a seat belt (please refer to Section 6.5)
- Failing to obey traffic lights controlling a railway level crossing or fire station
- Crossing or straddling a solid white line nearest to you down the middle of the road
(other than those occasions listed in the Highway Code, or if you have to pass a maintenance vehicle, a pedal cyclist or a horse being ridden, all of which must be travelling at less than 10mph)
- Failing to obey a 'STOP' or 'GIVE WAY' sign*
- Failing to obey a 'NO ENTRY' sign*
- Failing to obey a 'ONE WAY TRAFFIC' sign
- Failing to obey any other instructional sign, such as no right turn**.

* Unless instructed to by a Police Officer or Traffic Warden in uniform

** Unless covered by a local authority notice

11. Responding to Incidents on dual carriageways and motorways

11.1 These general safety principles can be applied on all fast roads and dynamically applied to the changing operating conditions that staff may be presented with.

11.2 Safety and general operating principles

11.2.1 Attending incidents on fast roads which include dual carriageways and motorways can be hazardous due to the speeds of other vehicles present. All responding staff must be especially alert at all times to personal safety and the safety of all other road users. The risks associated with this environment should not be underestimated by responders.

11.2.2 All responding staff should ensure that a dynamic risk assessment regarding where to stop is undertaken when approaching and parking at an incident. Particular attention should be given to the decision required regarding fend off in section 11.11.

11.2.3 Clearways and multi-lane carriageways can present with similar characteristics to that of a motorway, despite their designation. Where they present similarity, then the same considerations to safe stopping, fending off, parking, reversing and safety should be applied.

11.2.4 Should an incident have occurred on the opposite carriageway of any road that is separated by a central reservation or other live lane, or the crew discover that the

location they were given is incorrect, they must always proceed to the next available safe exit, cross over, junction or service area (if there is a crossing point at that area), and advise EOC of the situation as a priority. If required to return it should be on the carriageway where the incident has occurred.

NEVER: Stop to drop your crew partner whilst you proceed to the next exit.

NEVER: Cross a live lane

NEVER: Stop in any lane or on the hard shoulder irrespective of how urgent the situation may appear on the other carriageway.

11.2.5 Unless under police supervision, ambulance vehicles must not attempt to negotiate a crossover as they will inevitably project into one or both of the outer traffic lanes. This may carry an increased risk of collision and subsequent injury to staff, patients, passengers and/or other road users.

11.2.6 PPE (which includes safety helmets, visor or goggles and Hi-visibility long sleeved jackets and where appropriate role identification tabards) must be correctly worn and zipped up. The on-going requirement for a safety helmet should be dynamically assessed.

11.2.7 Staff should also adopt the 'best practice' of always facing the traffic flow, even if this involves walking backwards. Clearly, due regard should be given to any obstacles etc.

11.2.8 Drivers must be especially alert to the directions given by a uniformed Police officer who is there in official capacity or Highways Agency Traffic Officers (HATO's) for both access to, parking and egress from an incident.

11.2.9 No driver is exempt from leaving a vehicle in a dangerous position whatever the circumstance. It is the ultimate responsibility of the driver to ensure that the vehicle is not left in such a manner, position or circumstances as would be likely to present a danger to other staff, patients, passengers or other road users.

11.2.10 All precautionary means, (e.g. blue lights, flashing blue beacons, rear red flashing lights and hazard warning lights) must be used when stopping in potentially hazardous situations. The vehicle should be moved to a more appropriate position at the earliest available opportunity.

11.2.11 Where possible, fast road incidents on multilane carriageways or motorways should also be attended by a supervising officer to provide additional support to the safety of staff. Where possible attendance should be in a marked vehicle with roof mounted emergency warning lights.

11.3 Actions when approaching and arriving on scene

- 11.3.1 Approaching a scene can be a particularly hazardous time and a dynamic risk assessment must be undertaken jointly by responding staff as to where to safely stop in order to be able to work safely. Best practice is to have an active conversation to consider the risks involved and agree the course of action. In cases where the responder is single, the same considerations as if working with another should be undertaken.
- 11.3.2 If arriving first, it may be necessary to park in a fend off manner until such time that another agency is able to take over this safety responsibility (appendix 1). Avoid blocking other emergency vehicles in when parking.
- 11.3.3 If a situation is deemed unsafe, staff must not render aid until the scene has been secured for safe working. Consideration should be given to any immediate threat to life and dealt with accordingly.
- 11.3.4 Immediately upon arrival at the incident, a 'Windscreen Report' should be provided to EOC to include the exact location of the incident (direction of travel / nearest marker post / approximate distance pre or post a slip road etc), with a (M)ETHANE report as soon as possible thereafter. EOC should share this information with the Highways Agency routinely, Police and Fire & Rescue Service as required. EOC will make a decision based upon this and other information available as to how to manage the on-going communication priorities.

11.4 Use of warning lights

- 11.4.1 In general, ambulance vehicles in attendance at multi-lane carriageways or motorway incidents should display their blue lights and hazard warning lights throughout the entire period.
- 11.4.2 Consideration should be given to extinguishing emergency lights that are not required for scene safety and which could cause unnecessary distraction to traffic on the opposite carriageway.
- 11.4.3 In the event of a Major Incident being declared at a road based incident, the Police Incident Officer may advise that all emergency service vehicle crews (except Control Vehicles) extinguish blue lights to avoid dazzle and confusion. This advice will only be given when the site is safely protected and ambulance crews must comply accordingly.

11.5 Terminology relating to describing Incidents on Multi-lane carriageways or Motorways

- 11.5.1 Carriageways of major roads are referred to in a variety of ways, which include those leading away from London being defined as the 'A' carriageway or Northbound whereas those leading towards London are defined as the 'B'

carriageway or Southbound. On the M25, clockwise traffic is referred to as the 'A' carriageway, and anticlockwise as the 'B' carriageway. Roads crossing East to West may be referred to as Eastbound or Westbound.

11.5.2 When referring to a multi-lane carriageway or motorway, it is essential to follow the terminology as described in the Highway Code i.e. 'Lane 1'. 'Lane 2'. 'Lane 3 etc so that a common language is understood by all responders. The terms 'slow' and 'fast' lane are not recognised terms and should not be used.

11.6 Emergency Telephones

11.6.1 Emergency telephones are provided at specified intervals (usually 1 mile or ½ mile in urban areas) along each carriageway. These bear a number which identifies the exact location of the box and the carriageway upon which the telephone is sited. Some carriageways may display regular signage showing the distance from its start as another means of location identification.

11.6.2 Telephones within these boxes are normally connected direct to a Highways Agency control room and have been installed as an aid to motorists who require assistance. They are also used for reporting collisions and other incidents which may occur. Their unique identification helps in locating the exact incident site.

11.7 Emergency Warning Systems

11.7.1 Motorway or Clearway signals are usually mounted on gantries above the carriageway, or on posts in the central reservation. They are activated by the Highways Agency or the police to warn drivers of temporary maximum speed limits, as well as approaching hazards such as collisions, lane closures, road works, or poor visibility. There are sometimes trailer based additional signs located at the side of carriageways to provide additional information, for example when road works are in progress.

11.7.2 Ambulances proceeding to an incident should always consider the information provided but may use the exemptions as set out in section 10 providing that it is safe to do so. However, drivers should use discretion in slowing to the recommended speed. Drivers must exercise particular caution in situations where poor weather conditions can potentially compromise visibility.

11.8 Police Assistance and scene control

11.8.1 Police/Highways Agency vehicles continually patrol Motorways and major trunk roads and may arrive at incidents before the other emergency services. These vehicles are equipped with a variety of warning notices, as well as portable blue or orange flashing beacons and traffic cones. In general, the Police/Highways Agency erect warning signs that diverts traffic from the affected traffic lanes, thereby providing a 'harbour' for emergency vehicles attending the incident.

11.8.2 In the event of a major or serious incident occurring, contingency plans have been developed by the Highways Agency which allow the diversion of traffic from the affected section of the carriageway and, if necessary, from the opposite carriageway. Even though such a diversion is operating, ambulances will generally be allowed normal access when proceeding to an incident.

11.8.3 In the event of a fire at which the Fire and Rescue Service is in attendance, the responsibility for fire fighting will rest with the senior fire officer. The fire ground will be under their control and the other emergency services should be in a position to assist with any reasonable request.

11.8.4 The co-operation of all emergency services will be required to maintain a free passage to and from the scene and to keep traffic moving at a controlled speed.

11.9 Other Parking

11.9.1 When arriving at a scene that already has fend off in place, you should drive beyond the incident and park as shown in Appendix 1 which shows what a fully developed scene should look like.

11.9.2 Once the Police and the Highways Agency staff with Incident Support Vehicles and crash cushions arrive; the scene will be coned off and made secure. Once the scene has been secured, if your vehicle is not in the usual place because you arrived during the initial stages and instigated a 'Fend Off' position, consideration should be made to move your vehicle to the normal location if desirable or necessary. This should be completed at low speed. Prior to moving any vehicle within a secured area, that movement should be agreed with the police or Highways Agency Traffic Officer that is managing the closure.

11.9.3 Other emergency workers will not expect any vehicle movements within the sterile area. Any movement can cause potential danger to other workers. Where a movement in any direction is necessary, using an assistant to assist you if necessary. Where this is not another ambulance service staff member, it should be sought from an appropriate other responder to the incident.

11.9.4 A serious collision will be treated as a crime scene by police. All reasonable efforts should be taken to avoid moving either involved vehicles or debris from them. However, the overriding priority in all cases is the preservation of life.

11.10 Reverse Flow

11.10.1 Reverse flow may be instigated at a large incident. A reverse flow system is when the motorway or dual carriageway is shut and all traffic operates as a two-way road on one carriageway. Drivers should keep to the far left of the carriageway they are driving along, and be able to stop in the distance they can see to be clear. Cones may or may not be deployed to separate the opposing traffic flows.

11.11 Motorways

- 11.11.1 There are some characteristics specific to the conventional motorway. All drivers must ensure awareness of the evolving changes of smart motorways.
- 11.11.2 Responding crew staff should always check with EOC for the best access to an incident on the motorway network, and in all circumstances before joining a motorway against normal traffic flow to ensure that all traffic is stopped behind the incident and it is safe to proceed the 'wrong way' against the flow.
- 11.11.3 Only at a limited number of places is it possible to join a motorway from the general road network. Such places are referred to as access points and they have the effect of dividing each carriageway into separate sections. All access points are named or described by location and this information is used by control as a mobilising aid.
- 11.11.4 Access to motorways from the general road network at motorway service areas may be available, but these access points are usually protected by some form of barrier to prevent their use by the general public. For emergency service vehicles, special provisions apply which will enable the barrier to be opened when necessary. Additionally, service areas may include a road bridge which enables a vehicle to change carriageway.

11.12 Use of Hard Shoulders

- 11.12.1 In order to reach an incident through congested traffic, it may be necessary to drive along the 'hard shoulder'. This should usually be performed slowly and with great care, using audible and visual warnings. Staff must remain mindful that other drivers may have left their vehicles and could be crossing the 'hard shoulder' to reach the grass verge or in hearing you approach move onto the hard shoulder thereby obstruct your lane.

11.13 Smart Motorways

- 11.13.1 Smart motorways are motorways that use technology to improve journeys and help ease congestion. They do this by allowing the Highways Agency to adjust the speed limit as appropriate and to close and open lanes, including the hard shoulder, to traffic.
- 11.13.2 The design of smart motorways includes controlled motorways, sections of motorway where the hard shoulder is open to traffic at peak times and during congestion, or where all available lanes are open to traffic at all times and there is no hard shoulder (All Lane Running). In these environments, emergency refuges are provided at frequent intervals.
- 11.13.3 All responding staff must be especially vigilant to the increased risk that may arise as the result of other road users not complying to the signage.

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11.14 Lanes marked with an overhead Red X

11.14.1 Smart motorways allow the Highways Agency to quickly and easily close a lane to traffic to ensure emergency responders can reach an incident safely. On some stretches this involves the hard shoulder. This is achieved by setting the sign overhead the lane to be closed to display a red X symbol.

11.14.2 If you see a red X sign displayed then you **MUST NOT** ordinarily use that lane. In an emergency you may use it with caution and treat it similarly to how you would use the hard shoulder of a conventional motorway.

11.15 Leaving scenes

11.15.1 Ambulances leaving the scene with patients on board will generally drive off under police supervision to merge more safely with flowing traffic. In most cases, the hard shoulder will be used as the acceleration lane to reach a safe joining speed for such purposes. Particular care should be taken to debris that may cause damage to the vehicle or be projected into the carriageway.

11.15.2 Where appropriate, the use of an assistant to help you safely manoeuvre should be considered. Particular care should be taken in conditions of poor light or darkness.

11.16 Summary of Key Safety Precautions for multi-lane carriageways and Motorway Attendances

- Always continually undertake a sufficient and adequate dynamic risk assessment.
- Apply the same levels of safety and parking considerations to all fast roads irrespective of their designation.
- Maintain good communication between yourselves, other responders and EOC.
- Provide a windscreen report to EOC.
- Correctly wear all PPE.
- Face the flow of traffic when walking.
- Always follow the guidance of police or Highways Agency traffic officers.
- Ensure that the appropriate levels of vehicle blue and red flashing lights and hazard warning lights are displayed throughout the attendance to maintain maximum visibility to other road users unless asked by Police Incident Officer to extinguish.
- Consider fending off a scene to ensure the safety of yourself and all other road users when the first vehicle on site.
- If not fending off, where possible always drive past the incident and park in the obstructed lane.
- Never stop in the carriageway or on the hard shoulder opposite a traffic incident in the other carriageway or cross a live lane no matter how urgent the situation may appear to be. Always continue to the next junction and approach the incident with the flow of traffic having updated EOC.

- Emergency Crossover: Ambulance personnel must NEVER attempt to use an emergency crossover without police permission and supervision
- Use an assistant when manoeuvring at an incident for the safety of all road users.
- If in any doubt establish contact with EOC for guidance and assistance.
- No emergency is so great as to justify a collision.

12. Floodlights and Alley Lights

- 12.1. White lights, other than reversing lights, are allowed and can be used to the rear and/or side of an ambulance whilst stationary, to illuminate an incident. Floodlights are not to be used whilst the vehicle is in motion.
- 12.2. Some vehicles are fitted with alley lights to assist with the searching for an address and operate at speeds under 10mph. When manual use is required, these should only be used at under 10mph.

13. Negotiating Rough Ground

- 13.1. Every effort must be made to avoid a Service vehicle being driven off road unless it has been designed to do so and the driver trained to use it in these conditions, as this may cause the vehicle to get bogged-down and/or cause damage to the vehicle or property, e.g. playing fields. When driving onto a property all reasonable permissions of the owner should be obtained and steps taken to avoid damage to premises consistent with needs of the patient.
- 13.2. If it is necessary to negotiate prepared or soft ground to reach the patient and driving over the area is likely to cause damage, crews should approach the patient on foot and give consideration to the way in which the patient will be conveyed back to the ambulance.
- 13.3. In the event of any uncertainties about the surface, staff must not commit the vehicle until they have satisfied themselves that the vehicle will not sink and become impeded.

14. Reversing & Manoeuvring

14.1. Double Resourced Vehicles

- 14.1.1. Prior to reversing, the driver must agree with a responsible assisting person (for example other ambulance staff, police officer, Highways Agency Traffic Officer, fire fighter) a safe path for the vehicle to take. They will then act as a guide and the driver must not reverse until they have checked that the area into which the vehicle is to travel is clear. The assistant must then stand in the position outside of the vehicle from which they can best be seen and heard by the driver. Verbal instructions alone are inadequate as they may be drowned out by the vehicle engine or other noise. For added safety, where possible assistants should wear

their Hi Vis jacket/tabard whilst assisting the reversing or manoeuvring of the vehicle into position.

14.1.2. When the assistant's view is restricted from the front or side of the vehicle they should take up a position towards the rear of the vehicle. Eye contact must be maintained between the driver and assistant. Where the attendant is working with the patient and other assistance cannot be achieved. Extreme care and cautions should be taken to complete the manoeuvring task.

14.1.3. A driver who does not obtain assistance when they could reasonably do so may be held responsible for any collision that occurs.

14.1.4. Where it is not possible to gain assistance, the principles shown under the single resourced vehicles section should be applied.

14.2. Single Resourced vehicles

14.2.1. The vehicle must not be reversed until the driver is satisfied that the way is clear and sufficient space exists for the manoeuvre to be completed safely. Even then particular care must be taken in case a person approaches unseen behind the vehicle. There should be no hesitation by the Trust driver in calling on other persons to assist with reversing manoeuvres. Where necessary, the Trust driver should get out of the vehicle and carry out an adequate assessment prior to the manoeuvre.

14.2.2. A driver who does not obtain assistance when they could reasonably do so may be held responsible for any collision that occurs.

14.3. Reversing during the hours of darkness

14.3.1. Additional caution must be exercised when reversing during the hours of darkness, and when visibility is reduced by weather and environmental factors.

14.3.2. All reversing manoeuvres must be carried out at low speed and where fitted the reversing alarm and/or cameras should be used. Staff must remain mindful that reversing aides have limitations and are not a substitute for the attendant / passenger alighting from the vehicle to assist. Discretion should be used during night periods with regard to the use of audible reversing and tail lift alarms.

15. Leading or following other emergency resources

15.1. LAS Convoy

15.1.1. Other road users may not anticipate a second emergency vehicle and may not behave as you may normally anticipate when emergency driving. Other road users may close into the gap created once the lead vehicle has passed. This provides an increased risk of a collision occurring.

15.1.2. Drivers must not directly escort or follow any ambulance vehicle to an incident or hospital under emergency conditions.

15.1.3. Where a situation arises where two emergency vehicles find themselves in close proximity attending an incident, the second vehicle should drop back to a sufficient distance to be able to drive independently so as to minimise the risk above. Drivers should also use different siren tones to help inform other road users of the presence of more than one emergency vehicle.

15.1.4. Drivers should avoid, in so far as is possible, driving under emergencies in convoy. It is recognised that in exceptional circumstances such as major incidents, this may be unavoidable and extreme caution should be taken.

15.2. Police Escorts

15.2.1. Drivers should be aware that the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) will only provide an escort under very specific circumstances. Both services have agreed that LAS staff are skilled and appropriately trained drivers in their own right and that a police escort is usually unnecessary. What circumstance of exception arise, this should be discussed with an EOC manager.

15.2.2. In exceptional cases, such as serious burns or conveyance of a spinal case when a slow journey is required, police may assist with a 'slow ambulance journey'. Only the Watch Manager, the General Manager in the Emergency Operations Centre or the Duty Incident and Delivery Manager may make a request for a 'slow journey' escort. This must be agreed with the police supervisor in the Metropolitan Police Service Information Room.

15.2.3. Before commencement of the journey the crew must liaise with the police driver. They will jointly determine the route to be taken and appropriate speed to be travelled. This will be determined by the patient's condition and treatment being given.

15.2.4. It is best practice to ensure that a line of communication is established between the ambulance crew and police escort. This can be via the Airwave digital radio system, mobile telephone or other appropriate means.

15.2.5. When following the police escort the following factors must be considered by the driver:

- Separation distance between vehicles must be compatible to prevailing traffic conditions (i.e. not so close that a collision with the Police escort vehicle could occur upon harsh braking, nor too far back as to allow other traffic to move into the space between).
- During the journey, drivers should attempt to use a different audible warning tone to that being emitted by the Police escorting vehicle to help alert other road users to more than one emergency vehicle. Although the use of audible

warnings must always be applied at the discretion of the driver, they should be utilised in unison with those of the Police vehicle wherever possible.

- Be cautious and aware of vehicles pulling out behind the police escort vehicle.
- The driver must be aware that the ambulance in many instances is larger than the escort vehicle so more room will be needed to proceed through closing gaps. Larger vehicles generally have longer stopping distances.

15.2.6. Accurate driving plans, good forward vision, hazard perception and close co-operation with the police escort vehicle will determine the success of police escort journeys.

15.3. High Security Police Convoys

15.3.1. Staff will be aware that the Police/security services occasionally provide a high security escort function for vehicles carrying VIP's such as members of the Royal Family and to respond to specific operations. Escort vehicles are often highly liveried motor cycles and/or cars, but on occasion are unmarked vehicles using various configurations of audible and visual warning devices and may display warning signs in rear windows instructing not to pass.

15.3.2. In recognising that terrorist and security threats are now part of daily life, it is essential that crews remain mindful of how their presence and vicinity may be perceived by security forces when operating in close proximity to police convoys. The potential for criminals to use stolen/bogus ambulance vehicles as a means to breach security measures is widely accepted as an on-going risk.

15.3.3. Staff should therefore adopt the following practices when encountering a high security convoy under emergency driving conditions:

- Use continuous audible and visual warnings to highlight your presence to the escort group.
- Reduce driving speed on approach, and if appropriate, wait until you have been signalled through by the escort if the circumstances require you to 'give way'. If in doubt hold back and await clear signal from the security vehicle.
- Avoid coming between escort vehicles and their 'principal' vehicle or joining the convoy. Avoid following closely and if necessary be prepared to stop and allow a reassuring distance to be created between you.
- Give principal vehicles as much space as the circumstances reasonably allow.
- Be aware that such convoys may change direction with little or no advance warning.
- Always be mindful of how your approach may be interpreted by the escort group.
- Keep both hands visible on the steering wheel to the security convoy.

16. HEMS Vehicles

16.1 On occasion there may be a need to drive a vehicle owned or operated by HEMS. Staff are permitted to drive HEMS vehicles under the following conditions

- An emergency service driver can be from a NHS ambulance service provider /private ambulance company / any Police officer / person from the fire brigade.
- They MUST have a full UK driving licence.
- The insurance declaration (contained within the vehicle) MUST be completed by them before they drive the car. Once completed it MUST be given to the HEMS team who will place the completed form on my desk at the end of the shift.
- The person is NOT allowed to drive the HEMS response car under any circumstances under blue light conditions. They are not insured to drive the vehicle on blue lights. If they do so they are committing an offence under the Road Traffic Act.
- The person MUST be over twenty one years of age.
- They MUST not have any more than three penalty points on their licence.
- They MUST not ground escort the ambulance.
- Any incident MUST be reported to Paul Smith (Driving Standards Manager for HEMS) ASAP.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN				
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Intended Audience	For drivers / riders and cyclists using any 'Trust vehicle'.
Dissemination	<p>Available to all new drivers during training and to all others via a personal issue copy, which will be signed for.</p> <p>Available to all staff via the Pulse. All new operational members of staff will be provided with a personal issue hard copy pack of Driving related policies and procedures, including TP/065.</p>
Communications	By cover letter with the updated policy. To be announced in the RIB and a link provided to the document and a bulletin emphasising the change and importance of reading and understanding it.
Training	<p>All emergency response drivers of Trust vehicles are trained and assessed and the current underpinning course material and competencies are aligned to this.</p> <p>All new drivers to the Trust will undergo a driving assessment and be provided with a current copy of this policy.</p>

Monitoring:				
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Aspect to be monitored	Frequency of monitoring AND Tool used	Individual/ team responsible for carrying out monitoring AND Committee/ group where results are reported	Committee/ group responsible for monitoring outcomes/ recommendations	How learning will take place
Risk Assessment when approaching and parking at incidents	Constant assessment through the deployment of operational management resource sent to fast road incidents Work place reviews by clinical team leaders	EOC OCM Operational Managers Team Leaders EOC governance group Area Governance meetings	Corporate Safety & Risk Motor Risk Group SMT	Direct feedback to individuals
Monitor driving	Clinical Team	Clinical Team	Corporate Safety &	Learning from

standards (safe use of exemptions and compliance with emergency driving procedures)	Leaders through twice annual Operational Workplace Reviews Collision investigations	leaders Operational managers Area Quality and Governance meetings	Risk Motor Risk Group Quality Committee SMT	experience. Direct feedback to staff during workplace reviews
Knowledge and compliance (training).	Driving course teaching and assessments	Education and Development. Motor Risk Group.	Driver Training and Advisory Group	Structured course programme, student competency assessments.

Appendix 1 – Fending off

Figure 1 shows a typical fend off position. The vehicle is positioned to encourage other road users to move to the right whilst providing some protection to the scene.

This position is enabling working from the hard shoulder. Care and consideration as to the angle parked at should be given to ensure both scene protection and emergency light visibility to other road users.

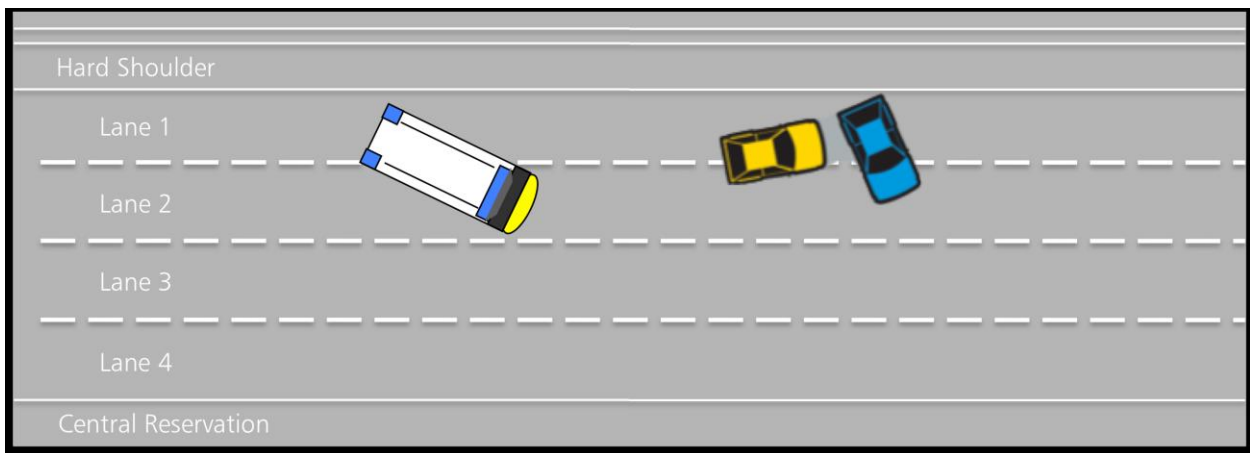


Figure 1.

Figure 2 shows fend off where efforts to avoid an island are being made. It should be noted that the length of the ambulance in some cases may not be sufficient to provide the full level of protection that is sought.

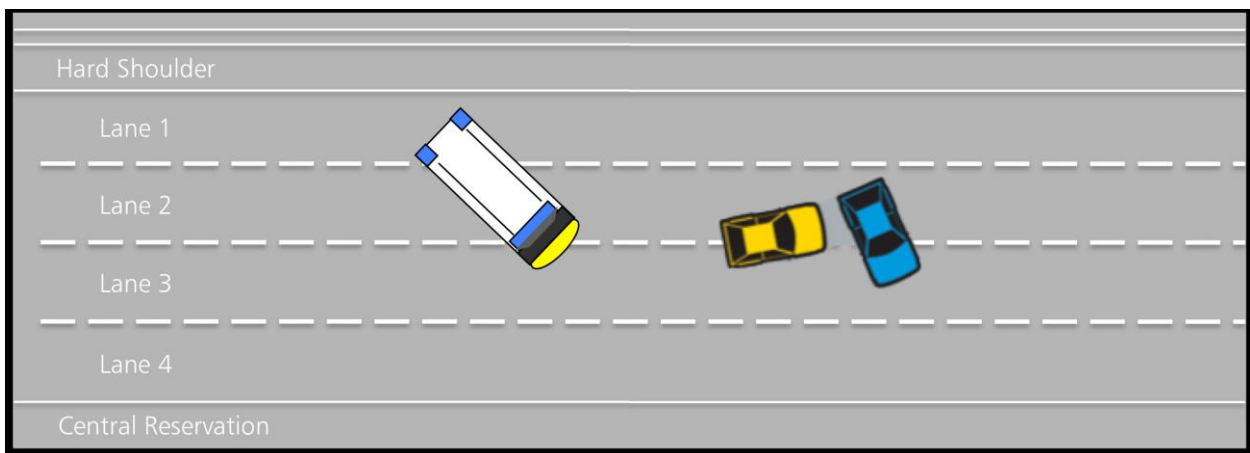


Figure 2

Figure 3 shows a lane 3 and 4 fend off. In this case, the ideal position of working from the hard shoulder cannot be achieved without full lane closure. The police will make the decision on how to manage this.

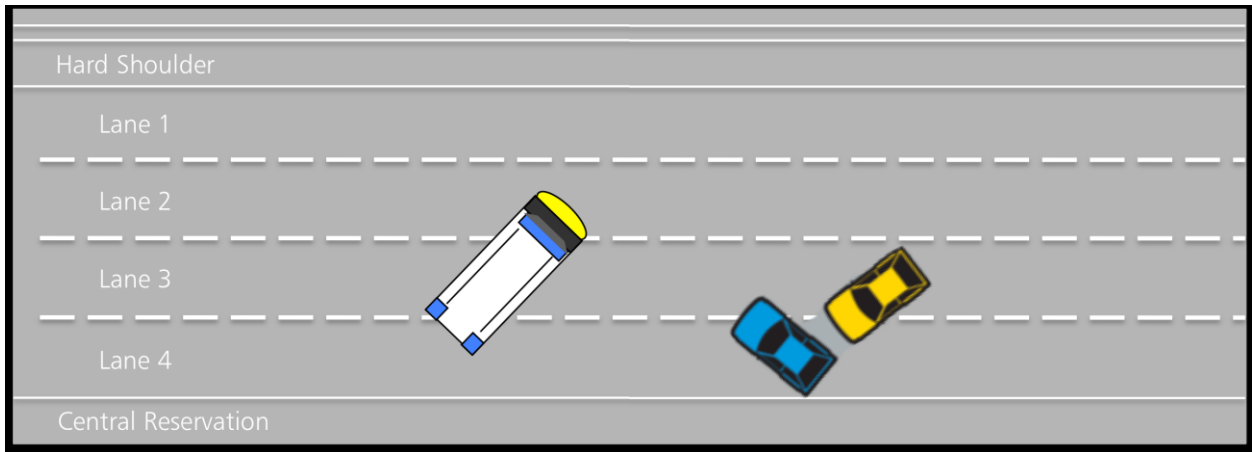


Figure 3

Figure 4 shows where fend off has not been effective and an island created.

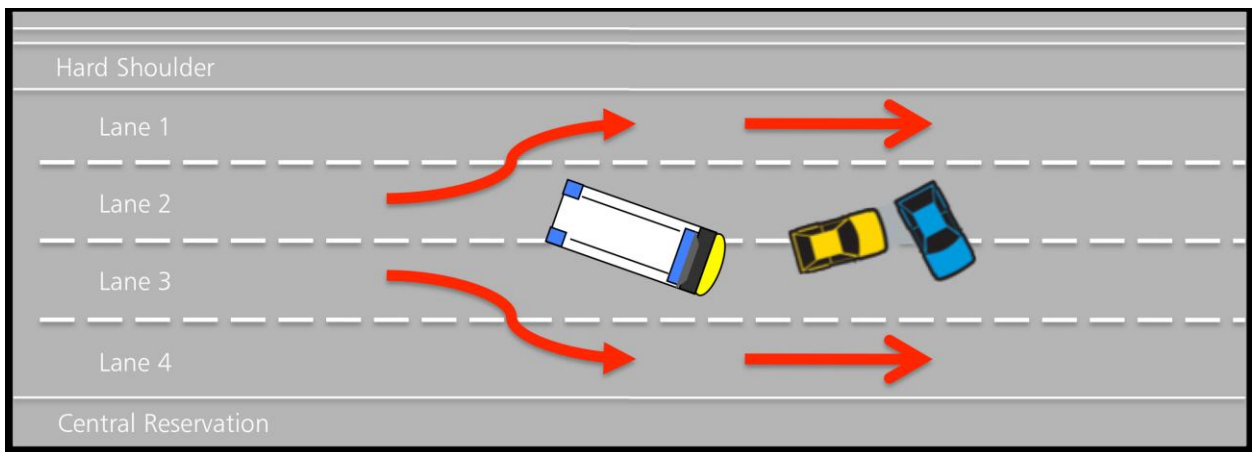


Figure 4

Figure 5 shows a fully developed scene. This can take time to put in place and all responders must continue to work towards this ideal position for the safety of all road users.

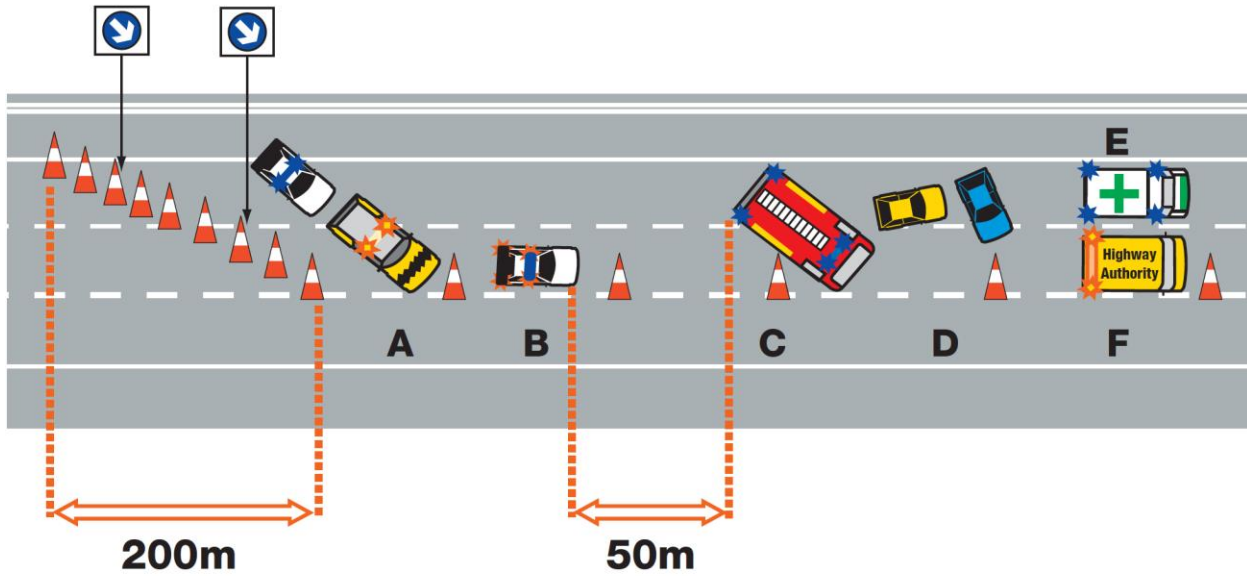


Figure 5