



# Teach what you **KNOW**

**A**nybody from an independent training consultancy who has ever delivered a driver certificate of professional competence (D-CPC) course will be only too familiar with the scenario. They are expected to face an audience made up predominantly of middle-aged (or older) men dressed in jeans, sweatshirts and fleeces, all with expressions on their faces that say: "I've been driving since Adam was a lad. You can't teach me anything."

If the trainer is employed by the same fleet as the drivers, and the course is being delivered in-house, then such a reaction may be less likely. Someone who clearly works in the transport industry and may be known to them is likely to have more credibility in their eyes; and such credibility may make it easier for the fleet to market its CPC courses to third parties.

That has certainly been the experience of Darren Kendrew, training

**Many commercial vehicle operators now offer D-CPC training courses. That's a good thing, as their familiarity with the day-to-day problems faced by drivers may offer greater practical insight than independent trainers.**

**Steve Banner reports**

manager at Hull-based East Yorkshire Motor Services (EYMS). It operates some 300 buses and coaches, and services routes in East and North Yorkshire. He says: "We've got three classrooms at our head office, and we run CPC courses for around 1,000 drivers annually. Around 40% of those who attended last year were our employees, but the rest of them worked for other firms, many of which are small bus and coach companies.

"The firms concerned tell us that they've used training consultancies in

the past, but have often found that the courses are generic, and not all that relevant to their precise requirements," he continues. "By contrast, our courses are more relevant, and their drivers engage with and relate to us because we understand the problems they face and the pressures they are under.

"We had an older driver attend our drivers' hours course recently who had made it clear that he viewed the CPC as a waste of time," says Kendrew. "At the end he admitted to us that he'd actually learned something."

## **SYMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING**

Other topics EYMS covers include disability awareness with customer care. Not all the disabilities a passenger may suffer from are immediately obvious, and if a driver can spot the signs, then he or she can deal with the individual with sympathy and understanding.

Health and safety is another area addressed by the company's CPC training, and includes manual handling.



Coach drivers regularly have to load heavy cases into their vehicles.

Each course typically has eight to ten attendees. "We can go up to 20, but I wouldn't want to go over that because if you do there's the risk that the training will become diluted," he says.

Operators are struggling to release drivers for training at present, says Kendrew, because they may not be able to find people to replace them, albeit temporarily; a driver away on training may mean a bus or coach has to stay in the yard.

Kendrew added that some firms are hesitating to book out of a belief that CPC might be abolished when the UK leaves the European Union in March 2019, at least so far as domestic work is concerned, although this seems highly unlikely.

Fran Perham, training coordinator at South Wales operator Newport Bus, is well aware that the bus drivers' CPC deadline is coming up in September (see box). She suspects that there will be a sudden surge in the demand for training in the coming months as both operators and drivers realise that insufficient hours have been completed.

Open to third parties as well as its own employees, Newport's CPC courses cover everything from fuel-efficient driving to walk-around checks. All are run at the regional bus operator's own premises, though it can travel to customer locations if required. Newport Bus can also train people to become truck, forklift or PCV drivers.

Nor does EYMS confine itself to PCV training. "We've done some truck driver CPC training, too, but a lot of that is driven by price," says Kendrew. "What we find is that a number of truck drivers will club together and approach us for training as a group; they want the

cheapest deal possible."

The need to keep expenditure under control is not of course confined to truck driver CPC training.

Bus and coach operators, too, have to watch their costs, and for that reason courses are often restricted to the classroom. There are exceptions, however.

**OUT AND ABOUT**

With over 700 vehicles operating services in Edinburgh and the surrounding area, Lothian Buses has begun a practical cycle awareness CPC course (pictured above). This involves drivers pedalling for 90 minutes around its Longstone training centre and on the public highway. The aim is to help them become more aware of the issues vulnerable cyclists face in traffic.

Several hundred miles to the south in Tottenham, London, 90-truck-operator O'Donovan Waste Disposal is also putting its drivers on two wheels as part of a CPC safe urban driving course (pictured, p21).

"They spend half the day in the classroom and half the day on a bike," says O'Donovan managing director, Jacqueline O'Donovan. "They now

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Jacqueline O'Donovan

know for example that if a cyclist suddenly dives in front of them then it could be because he or she has hit a pothole."

She was prompted to run her own CPC courses - she does the training herself - out of doubt as to the effectiveness and relevance of courses run by outside trainers. (Another course she has devised, Waste Essentials, covers loading and unloading, waste classification, including hazardous waste, risk assessment and the use of personal protective equipment, duty of care and dealing with customers.)

O'Donovan's courses are open to third parties. "Typically, we get drivers from small firms with one or two trucks coming along," she says.

When she delivers a course, she can bring her knowledge of the waste industry to bear if any queries are raised by her audience. "If the drivers ask a question, then I can answer it," she says. "I know the jobs they do and the scenarios they encounter, so I tend to get a positive reaction."

Responsibility for the driver CPC is vested with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency in England, Scotland and Wales, and the Driver and Vehicle Agency in Northern Ireland. Both agencies use the Joint Approvals Unit for Periodic Training (JAUPT) to help approve and monitor centres and training.

Obtaining approval as a training centre costs £1,500 and requires furnishing detailed proof that the centre is capable of delivering such training. Course approval involves providing details of the course and the qualifications and experience of the trainers delivering it, and costs £36 per hour of course length. [TE](#)

**THE RULES OF D-CPC**

Bus and coach drivers who acquired their vocational licences prior to 10 September 2008, and acquired their current CPC through periodic training, have until 9 September 2018 to complete their latest 35-hour training block. That date is pushed back to 9 September 2019 - the truck drivers' deadline - if they are dual-category drivers with acquired rights for trucks as well as buses and coaches, and if they finished their initial 35-hour block of training on or before 9 September 2013.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

All about driver CPC - <https://is.gd/irajox>  
 D-CPC course search - <https://is.gd/racopi>  
 Think cycle safety advice - <https://is.gd/vusudi>