

Police and road haulage industry join forces to help lorry drivers stay safe



Police Scotland and the road haulage industry are joining forces to help lorry drivers stay safe this winter, especially when crossing the country's high level and exposed roads and bridges.

Last winter, eleven lorries were blown over during a three week period between January 26 and February 16.

The initiative aims to educate HGV drivers to stay safe by following industry best practice and tying up side curtains when a lorry is carrying no load and by signing up for weather alerts to get advance notice before travelling during potentially hazardous driving conditions.

Superintendent Fraser Candlish, from Police Scotland's Road Policing Unit, said: "Although such instances are rare given there are more than 29,000 lorries on Scotland's roads, when they do happen they pose a significant risk to the safety of lorry drivers as well as other road users, and can result in disruptive road closures.

"We are also encouraging operators and drivers in the road haulage industry to be prepared for bad weather, follow advice on social media and register for weather alerts from Traffic Scotland.

"Road Safety Scotland, Transport Scotland, The Road Haulage Association, The Freight Transport Association, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Association and Traffic Scotland are all supporting the initiative, and will urge their members and

drivers to adopt the best practice.”

Andrew Malcolm, Chief Executive Officer of The Malcolm Group, one of Scotland’s largest hauliers and which is supporting the initiative, said: “As a major player in the logistics sector, we are continually reviewing and improving our safety campaigns throughout our business, to ensure both our employees and the public are protected.

“We operate approximately 900 curtainsiders in our fleet, which operate 24 hrs per day throughout the UK, mostly on a just-in-time basis. With the weather in the UK being unpredictable, we have to ensure our drivers are trained to move these trailers safely and effectively, sometimes at short notice.”

Transport Minister Humza Yousaf said: “Now that we are in Autumn, when we traditionally see more stormy weather, this is a good example of how we can work alongside the haulage industry to improve the safety and operation of our trunk roads in these types of conditions.

“The work done at our Incident Management Forum has shown that many types of goods vehicles can be badly affected by high winds but curtain sided vehicles are particularly vulnerable when empty and this is a timely reminder from Police Scotland.

“Our Traffic Scotland service is a useful resource and we would urge all drivers to check for the latest information before they set off on their journeys, especially if conditions are challenging.”