Compass Group UK & Ireland Ltd

**Bridge Strike Policy**

**Aim**

The aim of this policy is intended to give guidance to professional drivers so that bridge strikes can be prevented and to provide advice on the risks and consequences of bridge strikes. Striking bridges is potentially dangerous and expensive. An incident could result in a train being derailed with catastrophic loss of life seriously jeopardise the safety of the public travelling by train.

**Requirement**

On commencing employment all drivers will be allocated the “Network Rail – Prevention of bridge strikes” document for so that they may educate and familiarise themselves with their obligations.

**What is a bridge strike?**

* A bridge strike is an incident in which a vehicle, its load or equipment collides with a bridge.
* Most bridge strikes occur where roads pass under railway bridges.

**Prevention of bridge strikes**

You must make every effort to reduce the possibility of striking a bridge. To achieve this, you have a responsibility to:

* *Know your vehicle height and width*
* *Know your route*
* *Obey traffic signs*

Before commencing a journey, you must check:

* *The height of your vehicle*
* *The maximum vehicle width*

You commit an offence if the overall travelling height of your vehicle is over 3 metres, and the correct maximum height is not displayed in the cab.

**When en route**

* *Avoid short cuts to save time as this may lead you to a low bridge.*
* *Use a PSV specific satellite navigation system.*
* *Don’t rely on a system designed for cars as these may not avoid low bridges.*

**Stop and seek advice on an alternative route if you:**

* *Are diverted from your planned route*
* *Realise that your route is obstructed by a bridge lower than your vehicle*

**Remember that it is an endorsable offence to use a hand-held mobile phone or similar device whilst driving.**

**Traffic signs**

You should be aware that traffic signs are provided at bridges to show the maximum permitted vehicle height when less than **16´-6˝** (**5.03 metres**):

* Red circles prohibit
* Red triangles warn

If a vehicle is higher than the dimension(s) shown on a circular traffic sign, you must stop and must not pass the sign. If you pass the sign, you are likely to collide with the bridge and be prosecuted.

If the vehicle is higher than the dimension(s) shown on a triangular traffic sign at the bridge, you should not pass the sign.

At arch bridges, white lines on the road and ‘goal posts’ on the bridge may be provided to indicate the extent of the signed limit on vehicle height, normally over a 3-metre width. There may be an additional set of ‘goal posts’ showing lower limits towards the kerb.

At arch bridges ensure your vehicle passes between the goal posts. Slow down as you approach the bridge and only move to the centre of the road when you are sure it is safe to do so. If necessary, sound your horn or use dipped headlights to warn of your presence.

Drivers of vehicles with wide loads over 3m (9´-10˝) need to take extra care at arch bridges as the maximum height available will be less than the signed limit.

**What action should be taken if a bridge strike occurs?**

On the approaches to bridges with a vehicle height restriction, signs might be provided to give you advance warning of the restriction. This is to help you take an alternative route avoiding the low bridge.

You should be aware, however, that advance warning signs are not provided at all low bridges.

**What action should be taken if a bridge strike occurs?**

At a railway bridge:

**Step 1:**

* Report the bridge strike to the Rail Authority immediately so that trains may be stopped from crossing the bridge
* Telephone the number shown on the identification plate on the bridge
* Do not wait until you return to your depot before reporting the bridge strike

**Step 2:**

* Advise the police using the 999 system
* Any road traffic collision that causes damage to a 3rd party must be reported
* Each bridge strike causes damage to a bridge and must therefore be reported

**Step 3:**

* Report the bridge strike to your employer

**Step 4:**

* Keep the public away and do not move your vehicle

**At any other bridge**

* Report the bridge strike to the Police using the 999 system and then your employer
* Keep the public away and do not move your vehicle

**What are the consequences of a bridge strike?**

Striking bridges is potentially dangerous and expensive.

**On the railway**

* A serious incident could result in a train being derailed with catastrophic loss of life
* Bridge strikes may seriously jeopardise the safety of the public travelling by train
* Every bridge strike causes delays and disruption to trains
* Bridge strikes cause damage to railway bridges on other road users

**On other road users**

You could cause:

* The death or serious injury of another road user
* Severe disruption on the road network

**On you and the company**

You could:

* Be killed or seriously injured
* Suffer serious economic loss – you could lose your job
* Be prosecuted for offences which can result in imprisonment or loss of your driver’s licence
* Have to pay increased personal car insurance premiums
* **The company** could lose our operator’s licence, and we will be liable for the costs of:
  + Examining the bridge
  + Repairing bridge damage
  + Recovering your vehicle and its load
  + Delays to train services

**Overall travelling height conversion chart**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Feet/ inches | Metre | Feet/ inches | Metre |
| 16’ – 3” | 4.95 | 13’ – 3” | 4.04 |
| 16’ – 0” | 4.88 | 13’ – 0” | 3.96 |
| 15’ – 9” | 4.80 | 12’ – 9” | 3.89 |
| 15’ – 6” | 4.72 | 12’ – 6” | 3.81 |
| 15’ – 3” | 4.65 | 12’ – 3” | 3.73 |
| 15’ – 0” | 4.57 | 12’ – 0” | 3.66 |
| 14’ – 9” | 4.50 | 11’ – 9” | 3.58 |
| 14’ – 6” | 4.42 | 11’ – 6” | 3.51 |
| 14’ – 3” | 4.35 | 11’ – 3” | 3.43 |
| 14’ – 0” | 4.27 | 11’ – 0” | 3.35 |
| 13 – 9” | 4.19 | 10’ – 0” | 3.05 |
| 13 – 6” | 4.11 | 9’ – 0” | 2.75 |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Issue No | Approved By | Signature | Date |
| **1** |  |  |  |

I declare that I have read and understood the contents of this Bridge Strike Policy and agree to adhere to it at all times during my employment with Compass Group UK & Ireland Ltd.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Name | Signature | Date |
| Employee |  |  |  |
| Company representative |  |  |  |