

## Driving in Severe Weather Alert Status

### Severe Weather Warnings

A new 'alert status' system comes into effect from 1 October 2007 for the road haulage industry. The system will inform drivers of goods vehicle on how to respond to severe weather warnings.

This will enable the Highways Agency and Emergency Services to restore normality to the road network as quickly as possible, during incidents of severe weather.

There are two levels of alert – 'red' and 'amber'.

Drivers will be informed of the alert status through traffic reports on the radio and through the Freight Transport Association (FTA) and Road Haulage Association (RHA) membership networks.

When a severe weather warning is issued by the Met Office, the Highways Agency aims to help you with your journey by providing advice through TV and radio bulletins, on our website **www.highways.gov.uk**, and on overhead electronic messaging signs.

Follow the alert status.

### Tips for safe driving in severe weather

- Check weather and traffic reports before and during your journey.
- Choose the safest route, rather than the quickest.
- If possible check weather forecasts
- Ensure your vehicle is topped up with fuel in case of delays caused by weather or incidents.
- Have warm high visibility jackets in your cab.
- Keep your dashboard clear of obstructions so that the heater vents have maximum effect.
- Keep windscreen washer bottles topped up with appropriate additive to prevent freezing.
- Keep all cab glass, lights, lenses, reflectors and number plates clean and ensure they are working correctly.
- At the end of your shift always remove deposits of ice and snow that have built up around the chassis and wheels as soon as possible.
- In high winds avoid exposed areas such as high level bridges, viaducts or open stretches of road especially if you are in a high sided vehicle. If your vehicle is curtain sided, tie back the curtains if your vehicle is empty.
- In ice and snow allow up to 10 times the normal braking distance and brake gently to reduce the risk of losing control. Avoid sudden braking, sharp turns and rapid acceleration.
- In wet weather or flooding use your headlights and wipers. Be aware of other drivers - you may not see them in the spray caused by your vehicle so check mirrors regularly.
- In fog use dipped headlights, and keep your distance. For visibility less than 100m use high intensity rear fog lights.

## The Alert Status

When a severe weather warning is issued and the 'alert status' is:



### Red

Goods vehicle drivers should leave the road network and find a safe place to park up, and wait until the status is reduced to 'Amber'.

### Amber

Make sure you and your vehicle are prepared for severe weather.

Keep up to date with local weather conditions.

If possible, use a different route to avoid the area of severe weather.



Contact the Highways Agency Information Line - 08457 50 40 30 for the latest traffic information, if safe and legal to do so.

For more tips on driving in bad weather you can visit:

[www.heavygoodvehicle.com](http://www.heavygoodvehicle.com) or  
[www.freightbestpractice.org.uk](http://www.freightbestpractice.org.uk)

**Freight Transport Association**

[www.fta.co.uk](http://www.fta.co.uk)

**Road Haulage Association**

[www.rha.net](http://www.rha.net)



FREIGHT TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION



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For real time traffic information:

**08700 660 115**

[www.highways.gov.uk/trafficinfo](http://www.highways.gov.uk/trafficinfo)

24 hours a day, 365 days a year

(Calls from BT landlines to 0870 numbers will cost no more than 8p per minute; mobile calls usually cost more)

For general Highways Agency information:

**08457 50 40 30**

email: [ha\\_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk)

24 hours a day, 365 days a year

(Calls from BT landlines to 0845 numbers will cost no more than 4p per minute; mobile calls usually cost more)

## Safe driving at roadworks

*Remember that tiredness can kill. Take regular breaks from driving.*



**During 2006 two workers were killed and 19 seriously injured in the course of their work on Highways Agency roads.**

For the safety of all road users and roadworkers, when you are approaching roadworks:

- Keep within the speed limit – it is there for your safety.
- Get into the correct lane in good time – don't keep switching.
- Concentrate on the road ahead, not the roadworks.
- Be alert for works' traffic leaving or entering roadworks.
- Keep a safe distance – there could be queues in front.
- Observe all signs – they are there to help you.