

DRIVE SAFE



NEW ZEALAND RENTAL VEHICLE OPERATOR GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATING WITH VISITING DRIVERS

September 2018

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Cover photo: photonewzealand

Introduction

Visiting drivers are usually unfamiliar with New Zealand roads and driving conditions. Everyone who comes into contact with these visitors has a duty of care to help make their visit a safe one.

These Visiting Driver Guidelines reflect industry good practice for communicating with visiting drivers at three key stages of their trip – when they book, when they arrive to check-out their rental vehicle, and during their journey around New Zealand.

The guidelines have been developed by Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) and rental vehicle operators with support from the NZ Transport Agency. We encourage rental vehicle and campervan operators to share them with frontline staff and put them into practice. They can also be adapted by other organisations and operators that come into contact with visiting drivers, including travel wholesalers, visitor information centres, accommodation providers, visitor activities and attractions, international education providers and second-hand car dealers.

Please use the guidelines to provide visiting drivers with relevant and accurate information delivered in the right way, at the right time.

Code of Practice

We also encourage you to sign up to the [Rental Vehicle Operators Code of Practice](#).

Produced by TIA and the Rental Vehicle Association together with rental vehicle operators, the voluntary Code of Practice establishes a set of agreed standards and practices for operators to follow when informing visitors about driving in New Zealand and assessing their preparedness.



Photo: photoneewzealand

Stage One: Pre-arrival/booking

Pre-arrival/booking is an important part of the information process to support visiting drivers to have a safe journey. As well as rental vehicle operators, wholesalers are an important influencer at this stage.

Good practice for pre-arrival/booking

- Driver safety information should be front and centre on your website – make it easy to find!
- Provide information in the language of your key visitor markets

Tip: Provide the information in a positive and welcoming way and keep it user-friendly. There's a risk that information provided in the wrong way or too much information might deter visitors from coming to New Zealand.

- Encourage the hirer to consider if self-drive is an appropriate option for travel.
- Use the DriveSafe tile to link to <http://www.drivesafe.org.nz> (email info@tia.org.nz to get the tile).
- Use your website to provide links to relevant information, e.g. driving videos, driving time calculator.
- Provide New Zealand driving tips on your website. For example:
 - everyone in the vehicle must wear a seatbelt
 - keep left
 - 100km/h maximum speed on the open road
 - allow extra time on New Zealand roads – journey times often take longer than expected

Tip: Post no more than seven tips to drive home the most important messages

- Encourage visitors to stay a night at their arrival destination, particularly if they have had a long flight.
- Ask for information within the booking form that will be useful to assess the driver's experience. For example:
 - What is your country of origin?
 - Have you previously driven on the left-hand side?
 - Have you driven a manual/automatic vehicle?
 - Have you driven a campervan?
- Use the booking confirmation to provide information and links to safe driving information. For example:

- www.drivesafe.org.nz provides information for visiting drivers in English, German, Mandarin and French. The [CamperMate video](#) on driving in New Zealand is on this website. This video is also available in [Mandarin](#), [German](#) and [French](#).
- [Driving in New Zealand](#) brochures produced by the New Zealand Transport Agency and translated into numerous languages, including Spanish, French, German, Mandarin, Japanese and Korean.
- [Tourist and Visitor Road Code Quiz](#) – available in Mandarin, German, Spanish and English covering the essential road rules for visitor drivers in multiple choice questions. Works on computer, tablet or smartphone.
- A travel time and distance calculator. Good examples include the [AA New Zealand Driving Time & Distance Calculator](#) or the [Tourism New Zealand Travel Time and Distance Calculator](#) if you don't have your own calculator.
- [The New Zealand Road Code](#)

Tip: Put yourself in the driver's shoes and ensure you are providing information when the driver needs it, e.g. give them the road rules pre-booking so they can study them before they arrive; provide local information at the time of arrival



Photo: Csaba Shepherd

Stage Two: Vehicle check out

This stage is the most critical in providing safety information and assessing driver capability.

Staff induction and training

An important component of the vehicle check-out stage is having a strong induction and training plan for your staff.

Ensure training information is:

- documented to ensure consistency and reduce risk
- readily available for staff to refer to post-training
- followed up with a monitoring system to ensure staff are following prescribed procedures
- relevant, up-to-date and effective

Ensure staff know when to escalate concerns to a supervisor or provide them with sufficient support to make decisions.

Good practice at vehicle check-out

- Develop a set of assessment questions staff can use at the check-out. For example:
 - How have you prepared for driving in New Zealand?
 - Are you familiar with the [DriveSafe website](#)?
 - How often have you driven at home in the past year?
 - Will this be your first time driving on the left hand side of the road?
 - How often have you driven a car like this (size, auto/manual) at home?

Email info@tia.org.nz for copies of similar questions in German, French and Mandarin.

- Identify, via the visitor's booking information, where there is a higher degree of risk. For example, the driver is from a country that drives on the right-hand-side of the road.
- Alert front-line staff to these higher-risk bookings prior to visitor arrival. If they present tired, for example, recommend they overnight locally and come back in the morning to pick up the vehicle.
- Train staff to look for visual cues when drivers are checking out the vehicle. For example:
 - state of tiredness
 - nervousness about driving in New Zealand
 - If they are nervous about driving in New Zealand take them on a short test drive.

- Have systems in place to assist staff if they are concerned about a driver's preparedness, e.g. availability of a supervisor/manager
- Put driver safety information such as the DriveSafe flyer at the front of the paperwork you provide at reception and at the front of the vehicle manual in the vehicle. Recommend they read it before heading off. French, German and Mandarin translations of this DLE brochure are available on the DriveSafe website.
- Guide the driver to this information and get acknowledgement they know where it is.
- Show visitors a brief video on driving in New Zealand. Show them on their own device or email them the video link so they can watch it again at their leisure during their journey.

If you don't have your own video, several free ones are available, including:

- [CamperMate video](#) (7 minutes) – published on the [DriveSafe website](#). This video is also available in [Mandarin](#), [German](#) and [French](#).
- [Driving in New Zealand China toolkit video](#) (30 seconds)
- Provide verbal and written information about key road signs and road rules, e.g. keep left, wear safety belts at all times. Reinforce that these signs and information are law in New Zealand.



Photo: Tourism Holdings Ltd

- Provide a set of helpful suggestions/information for their first hour of driving. For example:
 - A good place for a first stop is
 - They serve great coffee/food here

- A good route to travel is....
- A great place to take photos is...
- Encourage visitors to use an accurate journey calculator to plan their trip.

If you don't have your own calculator, the Transport Agency recommends the [AA New Zealand Driving Time and Distance Calculator](#). Advise drivers that Google Maps can under-estimate New Zealand driving times, particularly for rural roads.

- Encourage visitors to share the driving. Try to get multiple people approved to drive the vehicle if they are experienced drivers. Ask all potential drivers the assessment questions suggested above.



Photo: photoneusealand

Good practice at the rental vehicle

- Within the hire vehicle:
 - place '[Keep Left](#)' stickers in a location that is visible for the driver
 - attach the steering wheel safety tag to the steering wheel
 - provide the Transport Agency brochure 'Driving in New Zealand' (if you haven't already provided it at the check-out desk)
- Point out the steering wheel safety tag. Check the driver is confident with manual/automatic drive.
- Accompany the visitor on a test drive.

- Encourage visiting drivers to use the State Highway network where possible. The settings on your GPS unit can assist with this. Emphasise that not all roads in New Zealand are equal, i.e. SH1 can range from grade-separated four lane expressways to narrow two-lane roads.
- If you're concerned about their driving after you see them drive off, give them a call in an hour or so to check that they are comfortable. NB, call at a time when they are unlikely to be driving.



Photo: davidwallphoto.com

Stage Three: On-road and return

Anecdotal evidence suggests that a higher proportion of crashes occur in the final days of vehicle hireage

Good practice on the road:

- Encourage drivers to use Tourism Radio (skoot <https://www.skootapp.com/>). Provide systems that make these tools readily available and train drivers in how to use them.
- Tourism Radio GPS Tour Guides outline points of interest, history, local knowledge. They also regularly broadcast safety messages that educate visitors on our road rules, alert them to high crash areas, places of caution, etc. Currently available in English only.
- Text drivers with safety information (text at a time when they're unlikely to be driving).
- Consider installation of vehicle technology that assists in limiting speed, e.g. speed governors/limiters, beeping alerts.
- Encourage accommodation providers and other tourism operators to provide and reinforce safe driving messages to visitors and share local knowledge.
- Provide access to information on road surfaces e.g. sealed/unsealed roads.
- Point out information on 'Excluded Roads' (where insurance may be invalid), and on difficult roads. Encourage the driver to use other transport options on these roads, e.g. buses.








Photo: Holiday Accommodation Parks Association New Zealand

Travel Apps

A range of apps provide useful and up-to-date information on road warnings and closures, fuel stations and rest stops, and general travel tips and information:

- [CamperMate](#) is a free New Zealand travel App available for download from Google Play and the Apple App Store. Get information and directions to campsites, hostels, things to do, public toilets, rubbish bins, free wifi, supermarkets and more.
- [Camping NZ](#) App is free and available for download from Google Play and the Apple App Store. It offers information on camping sites, costs, stay rules, whether bookings are required and offline maps.
- [TravelSafeNZ](#) is a free App available for download from Google Play. It offers useful tips and information on local driving conditions, and where to get help if required.

Ordering

<p>Free DriveSafe tile and DriveSafe flyer with key safety messages</p> <p>To order email info@tia.org.nz</p>	
<p>Free keep left stickers</p> <p>Keep left stickers are available to order free from the Transport Agency.</p> <p>80x40mm - 6 labels per sheet</p> <p>60x30mm - 12 labels per sheet</p> <p>40x20mm - 20 labels per sheet</p> <p>To order visit http://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/order/?id=4689</p>	
<p>Driving in New Zealand brochures</p> <p>A brochure about Driving in New Zealand is available to order free from the Transport Agency and includes translations in Spanish, Portuguese, French, German, simplified Mandarin, traditional Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, Thai and Arabic.</p> <p>To order visit http://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/driving-in-nz</p>	
<p>Keep left poster</p> <p>Print your own ‘keep left’ poster. To request a print-ready file email visitingdrivers@nzta.govt.nz</p>	
<p>Steering wheel tags</p> <p>To order the steering wheel tags email info@rentalvehicle.co.nz</p>	

International visiting driver insight

- Over the 5 years, 2012-2016, 6.2 percent of all fatal and injury crashes involved an overseas licence holder. Over the same time period, 4.1 percent of all drivers involved in crashes were overseas licence holders.
- Over half (59 percent) of overseas driver crashes were on the open road but the pattern varied between visitor types and regions.
- For the West Coast and Southland regions about 90 percent of the crashes involving an overseas driver were on the open road. The comparable figure for Wellington and Auckland was about a third.
- In about a third of crashes where an overseas driver was at fault, one of the factors that contributed to the crash was the driver failing to adjust to New Zealand rules or conditions. This was 42 percent for fatal crashes. The other factors that contributed to crashes of overseas drivers tended to be the same as those for New Zealanders, such as the driver losing control or failing to give way or stop.

Source: [Overseas Drivers in Crashes Factsheet from Ministry of Transport](#)

Hyperlink glossary

AA New Zealand Driving Time and Distance calculator www.aatravel.co.nz/main/time-distance-calculator.php

Campermate app www.campermate.co.nz/

CamperMate video www.campermate.co.nz/visiting-new-zealand

CamperMate video Mandarin language <http://www.drivesafe.org.nz/home/chinese/>

CamperMate video French language <http://www.drivesafe.org.nz/home/french/>

CamperMate video German language <http://www.drivesafe.org.nz/home/german/>

Camping in New Zealand www.camping.co.nz/

China toolkit for visiting drivers <http://www.chinatoolkit.co.nz/info-visitors/driving-new-zealand>

Driving in New Zealand brochures (multiple languages) www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/driving-in-nz

DriveSafe.org.nz www.drivesafe.org.nz/

Keep left stickers <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/order/?id=4689>

Overseas Drivers in Crashes Factsheet from Ministry of Transport
<http://www.transport.govt.nz/research/crashfacts/overseasdriversincrashes/>

Rental Vehicle Operators Code of Practice <http://www.drivesafe.org.nz/home/about-this-site/rental-vehicle-operators-code-of-practice/>

The New Zealand Road Code www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/roadcode/road-code-index/

Tourism Radio (skoot) <https://www.skootapp.com/>

Tourist and visitor road code quiz www.drivingtests.co.nz/roadcode/tourist/

TravelsafeNZ app travelsafenz.co.nz/the-app/