



TRUCK DRIVERS & MOBILE PHONES Fact Sheet

Making the Call on Road Safety

As a professional driver, the use of mobile phones allows you to keep in contact with work, family and friends. Following these simple rules for the safe and legal use of mobile phones will also help to ensure you return home safely.

Professional truck drivers often need to keep in contact while out on the road. Whether it be updates with the operations staff, a quick call from the family at home or one of your fellow drivers on the highway, your mobile phone is an increasingly useful tool in your working day.

Recent amendments to the Australian Road Rules (Rule 300) clarified that a driver must not use a mobile phone held *in the driver's hand*. You should check with relevant States and Territories on the implementation status of the amended road rule.

The use of hands-free phone kits does not guarantee safety in all conditions. Safety must always remain your first priority. Education is required to remind drivers not to be distracted by mobile phones.

There are ten simple tips you can follow to maintain safer mobile phone use while on the road:

- 1. Use message services to answer calls:** If a call is unnecessary or you consider it unsafe to answer at the time, don't answer the call. Let it divert to voicemail or an answering service and return the call later when the truck is parked safely.
- 2. Plan your trip and make calls when parked:** Whenever possible plan your trip and make calls when the truck is safely parked.
- 3. Pull over safely if you stop to make a call:** If you stop to answer, make a call or retrieve a message, pull over carefully in a safe area, such as a heavy vehicle rest area. Don't stop where you could be a hazard to other vehicles, pedestrians or yourself.



"Professional drivers have a responsibility to use hands-free phones safely. The photo shows an integrated microphone and loudspeaker available with Volvo FM and Volvo FH models."

4. **Always use hands free:** In Australia it is illegal to use a mobile phone while driving unless you use a hands free in-vehicle-kit or portable hands free device. There are a range of pre-fitted and retrofit truck kits available, or if you have a portable hands free device, make sure it is set up and working before you start to drive. A hands free device can reduce the physical effort to make and receive calls; however, it alone doesn't make using a mobile phone while driving safe.
5. **Tell callers you're driving while on the phone:** Always let the person you're speaking to know that you are driving. This lets them know you may not always respond immediately and reminds you that driving safely is your first priority. "Hello, I'm in the truck at the moment..."
6. **Never take notes, look up phone numbers, read or send SMS:** Always keep both eyes on the road and never take notes during a call. Don't read or send SMS (Short Messaging Service) while driving. If required, use a directory assistance service which connects you directly to the number and don't look up phone numbers from your phone's memory.
7. **Don't call in heavy traffic, poor road conditions or bad weather:** Don't accept or make calls if traffic, weather or road conditions could make it unsafe to do so. Also, even if the traffic conditions are light, always tell the person you are speaking to that you're driving and you may have to end the call if driving conditions change.
8. **Don't engage in complex or emotional conversations:** If a call becomes complex or emotional tell the person you are speaking to that you are driving and end the call. Complex and emotive conversations on a mobile phone and driving don't mix – they are distracting and can be dangerous.
9. **Use your phone's features to reduce the effort to make a call:** Before using your phone while driving, carefully read your phone's instruction manual and learn to use the speed dial and redial features. If possible, use a phone with voice activated dialling and automatic answering features to reduce the effort to make and receive a call.
10. **In emergencies use your phone to call for help:** Dial '000' or '112' in case of fire, traffic accident, road hazard or medical emergency. Both '000' and '112' are free calls and will connect you to emergency services.



Disclaimer

This fact sheet is provided to assist truck drivers with general information regarding the use of mobile phones while driving. Users of the fact sheet are required to comply with all State, Territory and Federal laws and rules covering the use of motor vehicles, including the use of mobile phones while driving. These safety tips should be read in conjunction with those laws and rules and do not replace or modify those laws or rules.

Circumstances may also exist where use of a mobile phone is unsafe. Users must use their own judgement and these safety tips do not suggest that the use of a mobile phone while driving is necessarily appropriate.

Users of this fact sheet must make their own enquiries and where necessary obtain specific advice in relation to any of the activities referred to in the fact sheet.

The organisations involved in the preparation and dissemination of this fact sheet accept no responsibility for the consequences of any decisions that users may make as a result of any information they have gained from the fact sheet.

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