

## In Vehicle Distractions Policy

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## POLICY FOR IN VEHICLE DISTRACTIONS

### **Purpose**

To minimise the risks associated with the use of mobile telephones and other distractions while driving a vehicle.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all Elgas employees while driving Company vehicles and rental vehicles. It also applies to private vehicles while being driven by employees on company business. Other authorised drivers of Elgas, who are not Elgas employees, shall also comply with this policy while working for Elgas. 'Mobile Phones' refers broadly to the range of devices with communication and/or smart capabilities such as phones, tablets and handhelds

### **Responsibilities**

Business unit managers will ensure that the policy is complied with within their area of responsibility.

No Elgas employee, or authorised drivers of Elgas vehicles who are not employees, shall make or receive a call using a mobile phone while driving. This policy includes all types of mobile phones, including hands-free, Bluetooth and voice activated devices.

This is further outlined in the 'In-Vehicle Distractions Policy'



## IN-VEHICLE DISTRACTIONS POLICY

At ELGAS, we are committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive working environment for all our personnel, including those who drive vehicles. Being distracted whilst driving presents an unacceptably high level of risk. Distractions are many, and the following items are either prohibited or restricted in all ELGAS vehicles:

- a. The use of mobile phones and two-way radios are banned unless the vehicle is out of traffic, legally parked with the park-brake applied
- b. While driving, mobile phones must be turned off or set to silent, and placed out of reach. An authorised passenger may handle any calls or messages
- c. electronic games, head-phones, devices with touch-sensitive screens and hard copy maps or street directories are banned unless the vehicle is out of traffic, legally parked with park-brake applied
- d. any device fitted to the windscreen, side-windows or dashboard which reduces driver visibility in any direction is banned
- e. smoking of any substance, including e-cigarettes is banned within and around all ELGAS vehicles

The following items may be used during a journey, provided all settings have been made and the item activated while the vehicle is parked:

- radio and music devices
- satellite navigation
- appropriate food and drink storage

When using a phone as a satellite navigation device it must be placed in a secure or permanently attached cradle for hands free operation and have call, messaging and notification functionality disabled. For other smartphone uses, call, messaging and notification functionality must be disabled.

Safe driving demands sustained attention in a working environment which is free of distractions.

*This Policy is supported by DEL-02-06-GROUP "In-Vehicle Distractions While Driving Commercial Vehicles"*

**Anthony Gilbert**  
Head of ELGAS

## The In-Vehicle Distractions Policy Supports Our Values



*At Elgas we don't want anyone to get hurt.*

That's why we have banned the use of mobile phones, including hands-free devices, while driving in company vehicles or on company business.

Elgas has introduced this mobile phone policy to reduce the potential risk of injuries and save lives.

**Compliance with this policy is mandatory**

Full compliance with this policy is mandatory. We will not tolerate people taking or receiving phone calls while driving and the potential risks this poses to our employees, their passengers and other motorists.

## Why Elgas has this Policy

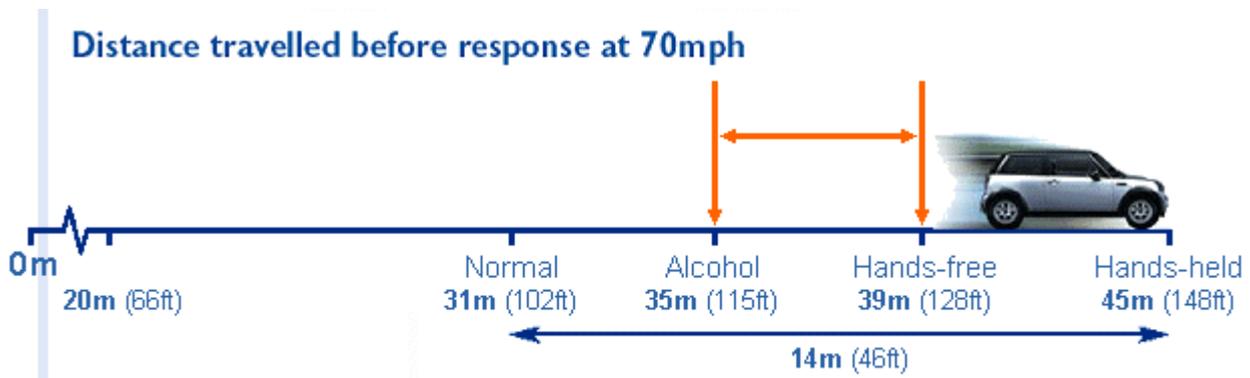
*The safety of Elgas employees and other road users are our most important priority.*

**Use of mobile phones while driving is a proven high-risk activity**

In an effort to reduce driver distractions and motor vehicle incidents, Elgas has implemented this In-Vehicle Distractions Policy.

Numerous studies from around the world show that the use of mobile phones by drivers while driving significantly increases the risk of being involved in an accident. The findings include:

- Drivers are distracted when manipulating a mobile phone or two-way radio and when engaging in simple or complex conversations.
- Mobile phone users run similar risks as alcohol affected drivers.
- The distraction is worse when engaging in conversations over long periods of time.
- There is no advantage using a hands-free kit over a hand-held device.



- Key learnings** Other key learnings include:
- Drivers’ reaction times were:
    - 50% slower when using a hand-held mobile phone than under normal driving conditions; and
    - 30% slower than when under the influence of alcohol.
  - It took hand-held mobile phone users half a second longer to react compared to when they had drunk alcohol.
  - Drivers using a mobile phone are nine times more likely to be involved in a fatal accident than drivers who are not.
  - Drivers who use a mobile phone while driving are:
    - more likely to cause an accident by wandering out of their lane
    - more likely to hit a pedestrian; and
    - more likely to overturn their vehicle.
  - Using a mobile phone whilst driving increases the risk of a fatal incident three times more than being drunk.

## Consequences of not Complying with this Policy

**Disciplinary action** Not complying with or following this policy is a significant breach of company rules and will be treated as **serious misconduct**.

Even a first offence will be considered very seriously.

Employees have been dismissed, after investigation, for using a phone while driving.

Any breach will be fully investigated using normal disciplinary procedures and the exact circumstances taken into account before your manager decides on any action they will take. The Recognition and Consequence Management process will apply.

However, to avoid any doubt, please understand that the use of a mobile phone is not something we want our employees to engage in and we will view such use as serious misconduct.

**Partners and family members etc** *What would be the approach to an incident where an employee’s partner and not the employee was involved?*

We expect our employees to have informed their partner of our policy and take all reasonable actions to ensure it was followed.

If the partner were using a mobile phone whilst driving and the phone or vehicle were company assets, this would be fully investigated, and could lead to disciplinary action for the employee and to removal of permission for the partner to drive the company vehicle.

## Frequently Asked Questions

1 ***Can I use a Company phone whilst driving my own vehicle in my own personal time?***

No. The policy applies to the use of a Company mobile phone at any time.

2 ***What about the use of hands free phones?***

Studies show that there is no advantage using a hands-free kit over a hand-held device. It still represents a high risk to drivers, so the use of hands-free phones while driving is also a breach of our rules.

3 ***Can I use my own phone in my own vehicle whilst driving to or from work?***

In the strictest sense, you're not in the course of your employment while driving to or from work, so the policy doesn't explicitly cover this.

However, we have put this policy in place for your protection and strongly encourage you to follow this in your personal life as well. There are significant risks in using a mobile phone while driving and these don't lessen just because you are not on "company business".

We hope that the information presented explains the rationale behind the policy and that you are convinced it's the right approach, and will share the information with friends and family.

4 ***Can I use my own phone in my own vehicle whilst driving on company business?***

No. You may not use a mobile phone, even if you are in your own car using your own phone. If you are on company business, then we have a duty of care to you. This includes driving to and from a location other than your normal site if it's for the purpose of your job.

5 ***Can I use my own phone in my own vehicle whilst driving on a personal errand within normal business hours?***

The policy doesn't strictly apply if you were on a journey that clearly had no connection with your work. But of course, the safety risks still apply, so we would expect you to follow the policy.

However, as most journeys within work time will have some connection with work (and will therefore be regarded as having been made in the course of your employment) you are strongly advised to adopt the policy at all times within business hours.

6 ***If I am driving, can I receive or make a work-related call using my own phone in my own vehicle in my personal time?***

No. We do not want you to put yourself at risk to receive a work-related call.

You should end the call immediately and arrange to call back when safely parked.

7 ***Can I use my own phone in my own vehicle on company premises (e.g. whilst driving in the work car park or on site)?***

No. We do not want you to put yourself at risk and have a duty of care to you while on company premises, whether these are owned, leased, rented or managed by Elgas/BOC.

We would regard this as a breach of our rules.

You may use your phone if you are in your vehicle on company premises when you're suitably parked with your handbrake or parking brake on and your engine switched off.

8 ***Does the policy apply to me using my own phone in my own vehicle in my personal time on a non-work-related issue?***

No. But again, it's important to remember that the risks of using a mobile phone don't change just because you're in your own time. We strongly recommend you do not use the phone while driving at any time.

9 ***If I receive an allowance for a vehicle or a phone, does the policy apply?***

The policy doesn't explicitly cover situations where the vehicle or phone are not company assets or leased directly by the company and you are in your personal time on non-work-related activities.

However, it's important to remember that the risks of using mobile phones while driving are severe and, no matter what time, we would strongly recommend you do not use the phone while driving.

10 ***What if there is an emergency and using my phone would help?***

Elgas would hope that you could assist in an emergency, but it's also very important that you and your passengers aren't endangered.

The best option would be to stop and park your vehicle before you make the call. Causing or being involved in another incident wouldn't help the situation.

Ultimately, we recognise that you will have to rely on your judgement in emergency situations to make the right decision at the time.

11 ***Am I allowed to use my phone if I am stuck in a major traffic jam and have not moved for a long time?***

Again, we rely on your judgement to act safely. However, if you are in a position to switch off the engine and apply the handbrake or parking brake before making a call, then this would not be regarded as a breach of our rules, provided this is not contrary to local laws.

You should keep phone calls brief so you remain aware of traffic conditions and you should finish the call before restarting your engine.

12 ***If I am driving a rental vehicle, does the policy apply?***

Yes. If the rental vehicle has been hired for company business, then the policy applies at all times (e.g. even if you're driving to a restaurant at night).

If the rental vehicle has been hired by you, then the policy applies in the same way as it would to your own vehicle.

13 ***Does the policy apply to contractors who drive Elgas vehicles or who drive on behalf of Elgas delivering our products?***

Yes, contractors **must** follow our rules when they are:

- on our premises;
- driving our vehicles; and
- driving contractor operated vehicles used for our operations on our behalf.

Adoption of our policy should be part of any contract negotiation or re-negotiation.

14 ***Can a passenger in the vehicle use my mobile phone?***

Yes, provided they do not affect the driver's concentration and the driver does not take part in the call.

For example, if there are multiple questions to the driver about a subject, then this is likely to distract the driver as much as using the phone themselves.

15 ***Does the policy apply to the use of text messaging, hands-free, phones and pagers?***

Yes, this policy also prohibits these devices as they are potentially even more distracting than a phone call.

Devices can be left switched on, but should not be used when driving.

16 ***What about the use of in-vehicle GPS and navigation systems?***

To be safe, adjusting and reprogramming these devices should only be done whilst parked in a safe location.

When using a phone as a satellite navigation device it must be placed in a secure or permanently attached cradle for hands free operation and have call, messaging and notification functionality disabled.

Prior to commencing the journey, place the phone in 'flight mode' or 'do not disturb' to ensure calls, messages and notification functions not related to navigation are turned off.

17 ***Does the policy apply when driving forklift trucks and motorcycles, scooters etc.?***

Yes, the policy covers all forms of motorised transport.

18 ***How can I remove the temptation to use my mobile phone while driving?***

Keep the phone switched off or on a silent ring tone while driving, and put the phone out of reach in the vehicle.

You should stop at planned or needed rest periods or by prior agreement with your supervisor at the next safe place, to review any messages received or to return calls once you are safely parked.

19 ***I am expecting an important call. What should I do?***

Plan your journey so you are able to take frequent stops if you are expecting an important call. Some other options include:

- using diverts to voicemail, messages or another person and check-in when you have stopped,
- check the call log when you have stopped, or
- get a passenger to take the call if possible.
- Inform the person whom you are expecting a call from that you will be travelling and unable to receive calls whilst driving.

20 ***What should I do if a taxi driver starts to use a mobile phone whilst driving me somewhere?***

It's hard to insist that they stop, but most drivers when asked politely are happy to stop using their phone. It may be good practice to inform the taxi driver before you start the journey of the policy.

If Elgas has a regular contract with a company, then it should be considered in the agreement that phones are not to be used when driving Elgas staff.

21 ***What is the difference between talking to a passenger in the car and talking on a mobile phone?***

The risk of having an accident is far greater whilst driving and talking on a mobile phone. Studies have shown that

- Passengers are far less distracting because they can point out hazards or remind drivers of upcoming exits
- They are more likely to change a conversation or stop talking when driving conditions change or become adverse
- Because they are in the car, they're more likely to notice when the driver needs more focus

22 ***I make and receive many calls whilst on the road. This will affect the response time to my customers. What do I do about this?***

Inform your customers that you will be unable to receive calls whilst driving.

Plan your journey so you are able to take frequent stops.

Leave a message on your mobile that you will be unable to use your mobile while driving but will respond at the next stop.

You don't have to stop working because you are driving. Pull over and stop, engage your handbrake and you can talk on your mobile phone.