

Supporting Staff After a Road Crash

For: Managers, Supervisors, Health and Safety Officers

If a member of your staff has been involved in a road incident, it is important to recognise they have been through a stressful event and offer the support needed to help staff get back on the road safely.

It is important that work colleagues are also aware of what they can do to look after themselves and their work mates after a road crash.

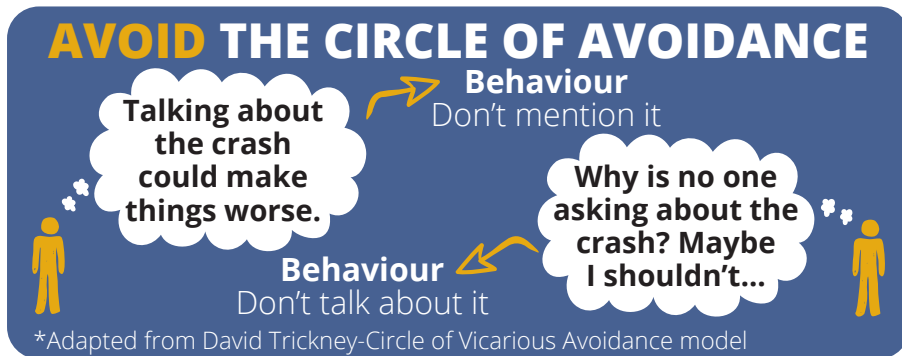
Benefits to Supporting Staff After a Road Crash:

- Improve health, safety and wellbeing.
- Job satisfaction increases.
- Reduce errors on the job.
- Reduce sick days.
- Improve staff retention.
- Improve use of company resources.
- Company reputation is upheld.

How to Support Your Staff After a Road Crash:

1. Talk

Have the conversation. Open the line of communication to offer support and for staff to seek support. Don't avoid the conversation.



2. Location

Find a quiet area to have the conversation with little or no interruptions.

3. Time

Find the right time to have this conversation, when you both aren't so busy. The best way to have a supportive conversation is to give yourselves the time. Make time in your schedules to talk and ask, "Is this a good time to catch up?"

4. Plan on what you want to say

Use sentences such as "I have noticed you don't seem yourself at the moment". Give an example when you have noticed this change. Highlight you are concerned, and this isn't a performance issue. Normalise their actions e.g. It's normal not to sleep well and feel angry after a road crash.

5. Listen to what they have to say before responding

6. Ask how they would like to be supported

 going forward, if at all.

7. Provide different support options;

 and

8. Check-up.

 Arrange another time to follow up.

**Mental and Physical
Safety on our Roads**

! FACT

84 people were seriously injured, and 18 people were killed in crashes involving at least one heavy vehicle in WA (2019).

(Source: WA Road Safety Commission. Unpublished Western Australia heavy vehicle crash data, 2015-2019 using data extracted from Main Roads WA Integrated Road Information System. (2020).

! FACT

It takes 24 hours for our bodies to return to their pre-crash state.

(Source: Kevin Gilmartin (2002) – Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement: A guide for officers and their families)

Be mindful of your own wellbeing, as providing support to others can impact our own emotions.

Getting Your Staff Back to Work After a Road Crash:

Being aware of the triggers for a staff member who was involved in a crash, having a discussion with them and managing other ways to help get back to work can assist with their recovery.

Triggers are the things activated by our five senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch) that can remind or cause a person to re-experience aspects of the crash.



DISCUSSION POINTS

Common triggers after a road crash can include:

1. The same delivery route being driven on the day of the crash.
2. Weather conditions on the day of the crash.
3. The smell of leaking coolant.
4. Driving the same truck.
5. The time of day the crash took place.
6. The song being listened to at the time of the crash.

It is important to work together with your staff member to manage possible triggers and find out what supports they need to help them deal with the changes and pressures in their life.

A common trigger is driving along the same delivery route a few days after the crash, which can be unsettling and overwhelming and distract them from driving safely. You may need to discuss changes in work pattern as measures of support. For example, changing the delivery route for a short period of time to support their recovery.

Other Helpful Resources

Injury Matters has a range of road trauma related information and resources available online and to order, including:

- **Has a road crash changed your life?** Find out how the build up of loss and other changes can add pressure to your life and support available.
- **After a road crash** Information on the normal reactions and feeling after a road crash and how to help with your recovery.
- **For anyone affected by a road crash** Where and what support is available for who following a road crash.
- **Education and training** Information and training sessions designed to improve understanding of the impacts of road trauma on individuals and workplace and how to support yourself and others (customised to suit your workplace).

For information on how we can support you to support your staff after a road crash:

@ info@injurymatters.org.au

📞 1300 004 814 (free call)

🖱️ injurymatters.org.au/mapsonourroads

📍 Level 2, 297 Vincent Street, Leederville, WA 6007

Wellbeing and Support

Help your staff member to look after themselves by...

Identifying and participating in activities they enjoy:

- Golf
- Playing team sport
- Walking
- Camping
- Reading
- Spending time with loved ones
- Watching TV
- Fishing
- Watching Sport
- Cooking
- Gardening
- Catch up with mates

Identifying and accessing supports through:

- Friends, family, partner or work mates
- Support groups
- Doctor
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Counsellor
- Injury Matters via Road Trauma Support WA on 1300 004 814
- For immediate support, Lifeline 13 11 14



Mental and Physical
Safety on our Roads



The MaPS on Our Roads project is funded as part of the Heavy Vehicle Safety Initiative, administered by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator on behalf of the Commonwealth Government.