Science and Technology Facilities Council

TRAVEL ON COUNCIL BUSINESS

Safety Code No 8

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1.23	Additional information inserted covering international travel	September 2021
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3.00	New sections have been added, regarding detailed guidance: • For lone travellers (Appendix 8) • What to do in an emergency situation (Appendix 7). • Changes to Appendix 1 regarding use of electric vehicles. • Appendix 2: Added example SHE Travel Risk assessment for driving on council business. • Defensive driving training increased to 6,000 miles per annum. • Further clarity on risk assessment for travelling to Low-Risk countries, in line with launch of the new OTAP on PowerApps.	January 2026

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Travel on Council Business

1. PURPOSE

The nature of the work undertaken by STFC necessitates that some employees travel extensively in the course of their employment. Travel, particularly by car, is the major cause of work-related fatalities in the UK. Travel on council business is therefore a significant safety hazard for staff in the course of their work.

The STFC has a 'duty of care' responsibility under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974', to "take care of the health, safety and welfare of its entire staff". This responsibility extends beyond work at STFC sites and includes instances where staff travel on council business or conduct work at non STFC sites in the UK and overseas. The STFC expects staff to demonstrate an equivalent commitment to take reasonable care of their health and safety while travelling, and driving, on council business. The nature of travel arrangements, especially by car, necessitates that flexibility and pragmatic judgement is applied to ensure traveller safety.

This code sets out the controls and policies adopted by STFC to minimise the likelihood of injuries or ill health arising from travel on council business.

2. SCOPE

This code addresses all aspects of travel on STFC business: to meet suppliers; install equipment; attend conferences and training events; visit other laboratories; travel between STFC sites (for example between RAL and DL); and travel to and between overseas destinations.

This code also references the 3rd party emergency support company, International SOS, who are contracted by UKRI to provide travel risk guidance and traveller support in times of emergency.

In particular this code addresses:

- Travel by car and other vehicles, especially when driving for extended distances or periods of time; and
- Travel outside of the UK on STFC business to low, medium, high or extreme risk countries.

This code **does not** address:

- The health and safety of staff undertaking work at a non STFC site. Such issues should be considered using the STFC's standard risk assessment code (see SHE Code 6, 'Risk Management');
- Routine travel by staff between their home and normal place of work;
  (Note - It does apply where the STFC requires staff to attend work outside of their normal working hours, for example, staff on call.)
  When staff are on long term secondment or attachment to non-STFC laboratories, the normal place of work shall be the non-STFC laboratory to which they are seconded.
- Use of forklift trucks or electrically powered vehicles (see SHE Code 4 'Safety and safe use of work equipment');
- Travel arrangements for facility users, visitors to STFC sites or contractors and tenants on STFC sites; and

- Activities of professional drivers whose work should be considered in more detail as part of the general risk assessment for their role (see SHE Code 6 'Risk Management').

Although this code makes reference to insurance, it is important to note that in most circumstances insurance is not a safety issue but a financial issue (i.e., insurance does not prevent accidents from happening; however, it ought to help with the financial consequences). An exception to this is that in certain countries, for example the USA, a person without insurance may not be able to access medical treatment.

UKRI and STFC provide comprehensive medical and travel insurance cover for all employees travelling on official council business. Employees must ensure that suitable medical and travel insurance is in place for any given destination prior to any overseas travel. For collaborators or other third parties travelling under STFC arrangements, STFC will ensure that insurance cover is in place. See information about insurance on the STFC staff intranet.

It is important to note that UKRI staff (and thus STFC staff) are covered for normal leisure activities undertaken in their time off while away on UKRI overseas business trips. However, should they decide to undertake extreme high-risk leisure activities such as skiing/diving, these activities would not be covered by UKRI or STFC travel insurance. In these occasions, staff will need to arrange their own travel insurance for these activities.

When planning work with ionising radiation at non STFC locations in the UK or overseas, see SHE Code 29, Appendix 16 and discuss your visit with your site Radiation Protection Advisor (RPA).

A bitesize version of SHE Code 8 can also be viewed on Totora.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Professional drivers

Those employed by the STFC whose primary role is the use of cars and/or other vehicles to transport people and/or goods.

3.2 FCDO - the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

A source of information on overseas travel risks.

3.3 International SOS

This service provides comprehensive support for all aspects of travel from pre-trip planning and advice, through practical assistance for travellers while overseas, including the organisation of any medical treatment or repatriation.

3.4 Country risk ratings

A system of security and health risk ratings provided by International SOS for use by STFC. ***Please note, current nomenclature on International SOS uses 'Travel risk' when this Code states 'Security risk'***.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Employees shall:

4.1.1 Consider whether their journey is necessary. For example, can the objectives of the visit be achieved through other means, e.g. telephone call, conference call or video conference?

4.1.2 Where practicable, consider using public transport to travel, e.g. by rail in preference to driving.

4.1.3 Travelers MUST use the STFC travel approval form to submit their travel arrangements when travelling overseas and seek prior travel approval from their Line Manager.

Requirements for Employees Driving on Council Business:

4.1.4 When driving within the UK follow the guidance identified in Appendix 1 (Additional Guidance on Driving on Council Business), and the controls highlighted in the risk assessment detailed in Appendix 2 (Driving on Council Business in the UK Risk Assessment).

4.1.5 Be formally authorised through a current "Permit to Drive" by the STFC to drive a hire/lease vehicle or use your own car to travel on council business. STFC travel and car insurance for hire is valid only where such authorisation exists. The "Permit to Drive" can be found on the Travel and Transport section of the **STFC The Source webpages.**

4.1.6 Avoid the use of motorcycles and bicycles for business travel off site.
If special circumstances require the use of such vehicles off-site, a specific risk assessment must be carried out and approved by their Line Manager.
*It should be noted that UKRI travel insurance does **NOT** cover staff riding a bicycle for travel on council business purposes.*

4.1.7 Inform their Line Manager, HR, and Occupational Health teams if they are aware of any medical condition, or take medication, that may adversely affect their ability to drive or affect the length of time they can drive.

4.1.8 Actively take steps to safeguard their own and others health and safety when driving. The unpredictability of driving conditions and road congestion makes establishing absolute rules for safe driving times difficult. The following guidelines should provide the basis of journey planning for drivers. Such guidelines must be implemented pragmatically and depend most critically on the driver's awareness and alertness for driving and the journey undertaken.

- The maximum driving period should not exceed 2.5 hours where possible and should followed by a 15-minute break/stop out of the vehicle.
- Where business travel takes place at the end of a working day, the total working day including business travel (and breaks) should not exceed 12 hours.
- The maximum continuous driving time, including breaks/stops, should not exceed 9 hours, or 400 miles, in one day; and
- Business driving and breaks must be included in consideration of total weekly working hours.

4.1.9 Attend Defensive Driving training (arranged by SHE Group) when considered an STFC high mileage driver, i.e., drive greater than 6,000 business miles per annum, or when they believe they are likely to exceed ~6,000 business miles per annum.

4.1.10 Ensure that when using private cars to travel on any council business the vehicle is insured for business use. Private vehicles should also have a valid MOT (unless it is a new car and is less than 3 years past its registration date) and be checked prior to use (see Appendix 1: 'FLOWER').
In the event of an incident, STFC will NOT accept liability for damage to an employees' vehicles.

4.1.11 Drivers must **NOT** engage in telephone conversations, text message exchanges, or online meetings when driving. Drivers should use breaks to pick up and respond to calls, messages, and/or emails. In the case of modern cars, mobile phones may remain switched on whilst connected to the Bluetooth or phone connection features of the car, so that emergency and navigation functions are active. The mobile phone **MUST NOT** be handled once driving the vehicle and from the moment the car engine is turned on.

Requirements for Employees Overseas Travel:

4.1.12 During travel planning, consult the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website and International SOS website, to identify the medical, security and road safety risks for the country(s) being visited. Use the International SOS Risk Maps to quantify the medical and security risk levels. Travel plans must be prepared based on the highest risk rating obtained for medical or security safety. See Appendix 10 (Travel Risk Ratings).

4.1.13 For travel vaccinations follow International SOS travel health recommendations and/or MASTA website. MASTA will detail the closest pharmacy where vaccinations can be administered. Vaccinations need to be paid for by the employee's Dept. Allow sufficient time to enable the effective implementation of prophylactic/preventative drugs, immunisations, vaccinations, or medical treatments.

4.1.14 Inform their Line Manager, HR, and Occupational Health teams if they are aware of any medical condition, or take medication, that may adversely affect their ability to travel on council business.

4.1.15 Must complete the STFC overseas Travel Approval Request form.

4.1.16 Travel **MUST** be booked via the UKRI/STFC travel management company. If this is not possible, written Director approval is required for alternative booking arrangements.

4.1.17 Inform their Line Manager of travel itineraries and contact details when travelling abroad, for example through shared events in their Outlook Calendar.

4.1.18 Use the STFC travel approval form to submit their travel form and to seek approval for travel from their Line Manager.

4.1.19 Prior to travelling abroad, register with International SOS, download the International SOS travel advice app, and complete all required training (ISOS training hub). If issues occur, DI must be contacted in the first instance.
See Appendix 11 (Training) for example training to undertake prior to travel.

4.1.20 Ensure that they have all relevant insurance documents and contact details available during transit.

4.1.21 At their destination, familiarize themselves with the fire management provisions (escape routes, fire extinguishers, manual call points etc.) in their place of work and accommodation.

4.1.22 When travelling to **Low** or **Medium-Risk** destinations (identified in 4.1.12) inform their Line Manager and conduct a documented risk assessment based on Appendix 3 (Guidance on Overseas Travel Risk Assessment) and Appendix 4 (Example Overseas Travel Risk Assessment).

4.1.23 When travelling to **High-Risk** destinations (identified in 4.1.12) documented approval must be obtained from the employee's Director. Undertake a documented risk assessment based on Appendix 3 (Guidance on Overseas Travel Risk Assessment) and Appendix 4 (Example Overseas Travel Risk Assessment).

4.1.24 The risk assessment must identify risk controls and mitigation measures which will be used and must be proportionate to the risk ratings identified. Risk assessments must also be reviewed regularly, changed as and when needed, and approved by their Line Manager. The risk assessment process is described in SHE Code 6 "Risk Management".
An example overseas travel risk assessment is detailed in Appendix 4 (Example Overseas Travel Risk Assessment), and a template for an overseas travel risk assessment is provided in Appendix 5 (Overseas Travel Risk Assessment Template).

4.1.25 **NOT travel** to **Extreme-Risk** destinations (identified in 4.1.12) or any country where the FCDO web site advises against "all travel" or "all but essential travel".
If special circumstances require travel to such a country, documented approval must be obtained in advance from the STFC Executive Chair or Chief Operating Officer.
The advice of International SOS must be sought for all such travel, and specific consideration should be given to ensure regular contact with the individual is maintained throughout the visit and to obtain insurance for such trips.

4.1.26 Notify UKRI and STFC insurers as soon as possible, and within good time (ideally within a week) before travelling to destinations categorized as **High or Extreme-Risk**.

4.1.27 Take extra care when travelling to high altitude locations (over 10,000 feet) and ensure that they are fit and healthy to do so. Appendix 6 (Guidance for Staff Visiting High Altitude Locations) should be consulted in the case of travelling to a high altitude location.

4.1.28 Identify suitable contact and communication measures which will be used during travel. Plans **MUST** identify methods to be used both ways, i.e. how the traveller will report safe progress back to base, but also how UKRI/STFC will contact the traveller in urgent circumstances. Protocols will need to be more frequent and more prescribed when travelling to areas with higher risk ratings.

4.1.29 Ensure that they know what to do in the unfortunate event of an emergency, such as theft, predatory behavior, violence, etc. (see Appendix 7, Guidance on What to Do When an Emergency Situation Occurs).

4.1.30 When travelling, inform their Line Manager where an incident, for example natural disaster or terrorist related, occurs local to them to provide assurance of their safety and plans as soon as is practicable.

4.1.31 In case of lone travelling, the FCDO page on solo and independent travel should be consulted before travelling, alongside Appendix 8 (Guidance for Lone Travellers).

4.1.32 Ensure steps are taken to ensure their own personal safety whilst travelling overseas (Appendix 9, Guidance on Personal Safety Whilst Travelling on Council Business).

4.1.33 Report at the earliest opportunity all travel related health and safety incidents to:

- Their Line Manager;
- SHE Group using Evotix Assure; and
- The relevant site contacts (if the incident involves damage to vehicles/hire cars);

4.1.34 Report at the earliest opportunity any instances of travel related ill health, occurring up to 2 weeks following travel on council business in the UK or overseas, to Occupational Health teams.

4.2 Line Managers of STFC staff shall:

4.2.1 Review the travel plans of their staff and satisfy themselves that suitable and sufficient control measures have been identified. Particular attention should be given to the travel plans of inexperienced travellers and lone travellers.

4.2.2 Ensure that all employees travelling overseas are sufficiently competent and have received all relevant information before travel. This can include ensuring that staff have access training available through International SOS.
See Appendix 11 (Training) for example training that staff can undertake prior to travel.

4.2.3 Review submitted travel approval forms from their employees prior to them committing any travel overseas. Travel can only occur if submitted travel forms are deemed appropriate and all risks are covered in the travel form.
An example overseas travel risk assessment is detailed in Appendix 4 (Example Overseas Travel Risk Assessment), and a template for an overseas travel risk assessment is provided in Appendix 5 (Overseas Travel Risk Assessment Template).

4.2.4 Ensure that staff members are aware what they should do in the event of an emergency situation, such as theft, predatory behavior, violence, etc. (see Appendix 7, Guidance on What to Do When an Emergency Situation Occurs).

4.2.5 Ensure that their staff are aware of the extra risks of lone travelling, especially when arriving late at a destination. The FCDO page on solo and independent travel, should be consulted, alongside other links (as well as Appendix 8, Guidance for Lone Travellers).

4.2.6 Ensure that their staff have taken all necessary means to minimize the risk when travelling, including noting emergency contact details applicable for that country, and ensure that their staff have downloaded and can use the International SOS app on whichever phone or device they take when travelling in the UK or abroad. Risk assessments must also be reviewed regularly, changed as and when needed, and approved by Line Managers prior to staff travelling (See Appendix 9, Guidance on Personal Safety Whilst Travelling on Council Business).

4.2.7 Ensure that for all overseas travel (regardless of risk level) (see 4.1.12) a risk assessment must be carried out. The risk assessment must:

- evaluate country, region and city specific travel risks, including consideration of security, health, method of travel and the welfare of the traveller;

- reference the risk ratings for health and security published by International SOS Risk Maps, as well as the Appendix 10 (Travel Risk Ratings);

- reference the advice provided by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO);

- detail what to do in an emergency situation and list emergency contact details and numbers in the case of an emergency situation.

4.2.8 Retain records of travel risk assessments in accordance with Appendix 13 (Document Retention Policy)

4.3 Directors of STFC staff shall:

4.3.1 Review and, where agreed, formally approve any travel to **High- or Extreme-**Risk destinations. The approval must cite all relevant information and sources.

4.4 Occupational Health, or HR staff support groups, shall:

4.4.1 Provide high altitude medical examinations (see Appendix 6, Guidance for Staff Visiting High Altitude Locations) and verification of fitness to travel (when required by host facility).

4.5 SHE Group

4.5.1 Arrange Defensive Driving training for staff who, via the permit to drive system, indicate that they drive more than 6,000 miles per year on council business. The mileage of STFC drivers shall be reviewed every 12 months to determine high mileage drivers.

4.5.2 Use Appendix 12 (Audit Checklist) as guide during any audits of SHE Code 8.

Appendix 1 – Additional Guidance on Driving on Council Business

1.1 Driving safely on council business in the UK

Drivers must be in possession of a valid UK Driving licence for the class/type of vehicle being driven.

Please note that if you have an foreign driving licence, then you may drive legally in the UK under certain conditions. Some foreign driving licences are valid for up to 12 months from arrival, after which time a UK license is required. Some foreign provisional licenses are also not recognized for driving in the UK. Please use the GOV.UK webpage for further information regarding foreign driving licences, https://www.gov.uk/driving-nongb-licence.

Drivers booking hire cars or using their own cars for travel on Council business are required to have a current STFC Permit to Drive, https://staff.stfc.ac.uk/core/travel/Pages/DrivingPermits.aspx

In the case of those with a non-UK driving license, the STFC Permit to Drive application form will only be granted to staff who have provisions in place to legally drive in the UK.

Drivers must follow the guidance and legal requirements set out in the UK Highway code, www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code and any other relevant traffic legislation, including that relevant to mobile phone use.

Drivers who drive (or are likely to drive) greater than 6,000 miles per year on Council business are required to attend STFC Defensive driver training (further details regarding refreshing periods are within SHE Code 8). Drivers who are identified as needing this training will be contacted by SHE Group.

1.2 Planning of journeys when driving on council business

Plan travel routes in advance of the journey.

The time allowed for journeys must enable them to be completed without exceeding speed limits.

The intended journey should follow the safest available route, which may not necessarily be the shortest or quickest. Usually Motorways are safer than, A roads. A roads are safer than B roads.

Driving time is part of the working day. Very long days must be avoided, particularly in winter.

Overnight stops may be necessary to avoid very long days.

Where business travel takes place at the end of a working day the total working day including business travel (and breaks) should not exceed 12 hours.

Journey breaks should be taken before the driver begins to feel fatigued - as a minimum, a 15-minute break every 2.5 hours is recommended.

Where more than one person is travelling, consideration should be given to sharing the driving.

The weather forecast should be checked before the journey. If on the day of travel there is, or forecast to be, thick fog, icy conditions or heavy snow, the journey should be postponed or cancelled.

1.3 Driving abroad

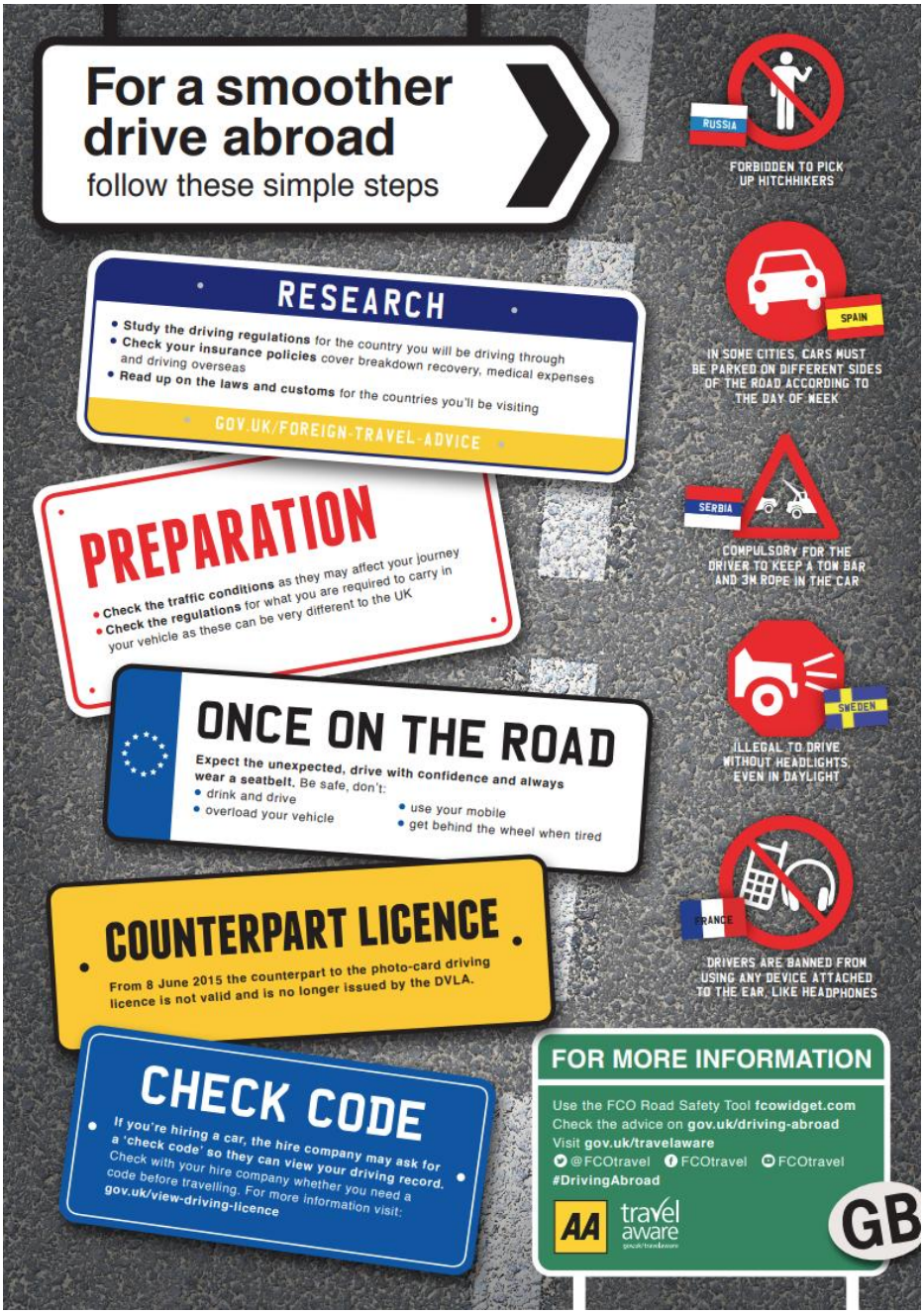
Drivers must familiarise themselves with the road traffic legislation and driving standards for the country they will be visiting.

The risks involved in driving abroad must be assessed before the journey is undertaken. The degree of risk will depend on the country involved.

Outside Western Europe and North America, it may be appropriate to consider the use of a local driver or taxi recommended by your host institution in preference to the employee driving.

Driving when tired represents a significant hazard and should be avoided for example after long haul flights, long train journeys etc.

The FCDO office have produced an "Overseas road safety checklist", which can act as a useful guide (as shown below).



1.4 Planning for journeys abroad when on council business

There is also an optional training course on Totora titled “Personal Travel Safety”. Whilst this course is not compulsory, it can be used as a good basis to remind yourself of

- The risks involved when travelling for business;
- Planning for your journey,
    - Route;
    - Schedule;
    - Time Involved;
    - Breaks;
    - Weather;
    - Seasonal provisions;
    - Hazards;
    - Parking;
    - Luggage
- What to consider before you travel;
- What to consider whilst abroad;
- Learn how to drive safely and act as a usual reminder of safe driving practices.

1.5 Mobile phones

Mobile phone use (hands free or otherwise) is prohibited whilst driving on Council business.

In the UK, it is legal to use hands-free devices, including Bluetooth connections, for your mobile phone whilst driving. However, you must ensure that you do not become distracted and lose control of your vehicle. The law prohibits using hand-held phones or similar devices while driving**l.**

If you're using a hands-free system, make sure it's set up before you start driving and that you can operate it without taking your eyes off the road. If the police believe you're not in full control of your vehicle, you can still be stopped and penalised.

Staff should use scheduled breaks as a means to pick up and respond to text messages or emails.

1.6 Condition of vehicle

Hire cars are contracted to be provided in a road-worthy condition.

Where a vehicle is not road worthy alternative transport must be found and the matter reported to the relevant purchasing contact.

Drivers of hire cars should assess, to the best of their ability, the roadworthiness of vehicles prior to undertaking a journey.

Recommended basic checks –

- Condition of tyres (pressure and tread)
- Lights clean and operational - headlights (dipped & full); rear lights; brake lights; indicators.
- Windscreen wipers operational
- Screen wash operational

When checking your vehicle (whether hire car or personal), drivers should assess, to the best of their ability, the roadworthiness of vehicles prior to undertaking a journey. Think of ‘**FLOWER**’ for checks.

- **F**uel;

- **L**ights;
- **O**il;
- **W**ater;
- **E**lectrics; and
- **R**ubber (i.e., tyres).

Where an employee drives their own vehicle on council business, the employee has a responsibility to ensure that it is suitable for the intended task, has current road tax, a valid MOT, and is insured for business use. If any of these documents are not in place for your own vehicle, then you are not permitted to use this vehicle for council business.

1.7 Type of vehicle

Fully electric vehicles are now an alternative method of transport provided by most hire car companies, alongside hybrid, petrol and diesel cars.

Care should be taken when deciding to use an electric hire car for a particular trip. Numerous factors must be considered, including:

- Availability of charging stations along route;
- Availability of charging stations at hotels or final destination;
- Distance and length of time on the route;
- Time potentially needed to charge vehicle during the route;
- Which charging stations the provided vehicle can use; and
- Phone apps or online account needed when charging the provided vehicle.

When travelling in the UK, the EDF energy electric charging points map can be used to find charging point locations and to plan routes to take during the journey. These can also be used to assess if an electric vehicle is suitable to use for the intended journey. Zap Map can also be used to find charging point locations in the UK and/or abroad. Other online databases should also be consulted, as and when appropriate.

Drivers must note that many electric vehicle charging stations will not simply let you take a charging cable from one of the charging stations and let you plug in an charge the battery, akin to filling up a hybrid, diesel or petrol vehicle with petrol or diesel at a fuel station. An online account, or an account on a phone app, is often needed prior to using an electric charging point. Only staff who class themselves as experienced electric drivers, and as competent enough to know how to use the charging points, should therefore request to use an electric vehicle when hiring a car. This way, potential problems with battery charging, and the risk of an hire electric vehicle running out of battery whilst in use can be avoided.

If any driver is not comfortable or familiar with driving an electric vehicle, or has any doubts regarding any of the points listed above, then a hybrid, petrol, or diesel-based car should be used instead.

In the unfortunate and unexpected event of a driver inexperienced at using electric vehicles being given an electric vehicle to drive, and if the driver is extremely uncomfortable in taking this vehicle, this car should be refused and alternative arrangements made with the car hire company.

1.8 Driver familiarisation with hire car.

Drivers of hire cars should familiarise themselves with the controls of the hire car prior to commencing their journey: including indicators, lights, horn, wipers.

Familiarisation should include the setting of seat and mirror position to allow safe driving.

Efforts should also be made to ensure that knowledge of how to open the petrol/diesel cap on car, in the event of needing to refuel, and/or charge an electric or hybrid vehicle should be made before setting off on the journey.

In the case of more modern cars, the driver should note any extra features to aid them (as desired) during their journey. Knowledge of how to turn these features on and off (if possible) should be noted before making each journey. These include features such as:

- Speed limiters;
- Lane assistance;
- Blind spot monitoring;
- Automatic Emergency Braking;
- Parking and reversing assistance;
- Traffic sign recognition;
- Driver alerts;
- Steering assist;
- Remote starting; and
- Highway driving assistance.

Some modern vehicles will not allow certain features to be turned off. Drivers should therefore be aware and consider this when selecting a model of hire car.

Modern cars now often allow users to connect their phone to the car, either via a direct phone connection through a charging cable or via Bluetooth. Modern cars also now save phone account details to allow users to quickly reconnect to the vehicle and to save time. Whilst these features can be used during the car hire period, including hands free call assistance and using online navigation systems, all staff should remove any personal information, Bluetooth connections or accounts stored on the car and their own mobile phone once they are finished with the vehicle, and before returning the hire car.

Other electric vehicles, such as scooters, e-bikes and motor bikes, should not be used when travelling for council business in the UK and/or abroad.

1.9 Emergency equipment

Where lone driving is required, consideration should be given to the provision of mobile phones for use in an emergency.

Emergency kits containing a first aid kit, warning triangle and high visibility jacket are available from site security. Hire cars are unlikely to be supplied with this equipment.

1.10 Accidents and emergencies

In the event of involvement in a road traffic accident drivers involved must stop to determine the extent of any injuries to individuals or damage to vehicles and as appropriate call the emergency services for assistance.

Individuals must record, as far as they are able, as much detail as possible regarding the accident using the STFC Brief Accident Report Form, supplied in the Hire Car Information Pack.

At no time should staff admit blame or accept liability.

1.11 STFC Hire Car Information - STFC Hire Car FAQs

1.12 Driving Licence Categories & Authorisations – DVLA website

Appendix 2 – Driving on Council Business in the UK Risk Assessment

Click here to view Appendix 2:

https://www.she.stfc.ac.uk/Pages/SC08%20-%20Appendix%202%20-%20Driving%20on%20Council%20Business%20in%20the%20UK%20Risk%20Assessment.pdf

Appendix 3 – Guidance on Overseas Travel Risk Assessment

International travel poses various risks to health and safety, depending on the traveller's experience, the health of the traveller and the location of travel. STFC staff may encounter sudden and significant changes in altitude, humidity, temperature and exposure to a variety of infectious diseases, which may result in ill health and sickness.

This document aims to give those STFC staff travelling overseas guidance in areas that need to be considered if they need to complete an Overseas Travel Risk Assessment. Not all the hazards identified is this document will be applicable to all countries so careful consideration of the 'reasonable and foreseeable risks' should be made when completing the risk assessment. This document makes no assumptions of the travel experience of those undertaking trips.

Driving on Council business, and driving overseas, is one of the most significant hazards faced by STFC staff. Consider whether you need to drive or can use public transport or employ taxis if at all possible.

There are a number of topics that should be considered:

1) Flights
2) Driving and travel in a foreign country
3) Environmental: Climate and Geology
4) Security
5) Food and Drink
6) Health
7) Animals, Insects and Parasites

All individuals planning travel should seek competent advice on the potential hazards for their chosen destination(s) and understand how best to protect their health and safety. The most helpful and practical source of such advice is most likely to be your host(s) in the places being visited. General travel advice can also be gained, by country, from the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office **(FCDO)** website, **International SOS** websites and International SOS **Risk Maps**.

Insurance and Medical Arrangements

Employees planning overseas travel should consult the harmonised RC Travel policy for short visits overseas CEM 16 (Sections 16 to 18) for the current arrangements regarding Insurance and Medical Arrangements.

Each of the following sections will give a guide to possible hazards and actions to be taken to prevent or minimise the realisation of the risks involved. This is by no means an exhaustive list but should help those undertaking overseas travel to consider a number of potential hazards.

1) Flights

Hazard	Effect and possible Controls for the Hazard
Fatigue	A long journey, whether a business trip or a vacation, can sap your energy. This may result in the traveller being prone to one or more of the other hazards identified. Controls to reduce the risk • Organize your trip seamlessly to avoid the unpleasant surprises that a poorly planned trip can present-such as a missed flight or lack of decent lodging. These situations cause extreme stress, which will dissipate your energy greatly. • Pace yourself when possible. Leave some room on the itinerary for downtime, especially following a long flight, train/bus ride or drive. • Get suitable rest or sleep when possible; away from noise and distractions. • Make the extra effort to eat healthy foods and maintain hydration. • Undertake small amounts of exercise to help boost long term energy levels. • Stimulate yourself mentally with music, a good read, or even conversation with fellow travellers. Our energy levels can stem from our mental status as well as physical. • Make a pronounced effort to stay positive and upbeat on your journey. Depression is closely associated with fatigue.
Jet Lag	This term refers to the feelings of disorientation, light-headedness, impatience, lack of energy, and general discomfort that follow travelling across time zones. Jet lag may persist for several days after arrival and can be accompanied by loss of appetite, difficulty in sleeping, constipation, and grogginess. Although individuals differ in severity of symptoms they experience, many people simply fail to recognise how they are affected, especially in tasks requiring concentration, situation awareness, and complex coordination. Controls to reduce the risk • Try to leave time to recover. Bear in mind potential effects of Jet lag when planning your work and travel schedule.
Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)	The DVT affects blood vessels which go through the calf and thigh muscles, and are not those which you can see just below the skin. DVT occurs when a blood clot forms in a leg vein where it usually remains stuck to the vein wall. The symptoms tend to settle gradually, but there are two main possible complications: Pulmonary embolus involves the blood clot becoming dislodged and moving to the lung; Long-term discomfort and swelling of the calf occur in some cases following a DVT (post-thrombotic syndrome); DVT can occur on long journeys by plane, train, etc., most probably due to sitting cramped for long periods. In plane journeys other factors that may possibly play a part include: reduced cabin pressure, reduced oxygen levels in the plane, slight dehydration caused by not drinking much water, and drinking too many alcoholic drinks. Controls to reduce the risk Whilst travelling on a long journey, particularly on a long-haul plane trip:

	• Exercise your calf and foot muscles regularly. Every half hour or so, bend and straighten your legs, feet and toes when you are seated; • Press the balls of your feet down hard against the floor or foot-rest every so often. This helps to increase the blood flow in your legs; • Take a walk up and down the aisle every hour or so, when the aircraft crew say it is safe to do so; • If you are allowed, get off the plane and walk about if the plane stops for refuelling; • Drink plenty of water (to avoid dehydration); • Do not drink too much alcohol. (Alcohol can cause dehydration and immobility); • Do not take sleeping tablets, which cause immobility; • Consider wearing compression stockings; • Some people at high risk may also be advised to take anticoagulant medication; • Have a little walk straight after the journey to 'get the circulation going'. The vast majority of travellers have no problems. However, if you develop a swollen painful calf or breathing difficulties shortly after a long journey, then see a doctor urgently. Note: slight painless puffiness of feet and ankles is common after a long journey and is not due to a DVT.

2) Driving and travel in a foreign country

Hazard	**Effect and possible Controls for the Hazard**
Competence to drive in the foreign country	Poor driving may lead to injury of driver and others who may be harmed by inability of driver to understand local highway regulations. Traffic collisions are the most frequent cause of death among travellers. The risks associated traffic collisions are greatest in low and middle income countries, where trauma care systems may not be well developed. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Consider how the trip could be undertaken without driving, for example can you host arrange to collect you from the airport. • Drivers must be in possession of a valid International Driving Permit (IDP) and the licence from your home country in order to drive in countries such as Chile. The requirements for this will vary from country to country. • Drivers must carry both of these licences along with your passport and any documents relating to the vehicle for example hire/lease agreements. Any police officer stopping the driver will request these documents. • Obtain information on the regulations governing traffic and vehicle maintenance, and on the general state of the roads. • It may be wise to keep doors locked at all times and be aware of the possibility of criminals when stopping at traffic lights. • Do not drive after drinking alcohol.
Driving with excessive speed	Being stopped by the Police and receiving a fine or other penalty which is likely in the country may significantly hinder the purpose for which you are visiting that country. Any penalties will be the responsibility of the driver involved. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Drivers should not exceed the maximum speed limit defined by the country. • Make sure that you are conversant with the local highway regulations, for example right turn at lights in the USA. • Check the state of the vehicle prior to use e.g. tyres, seat belts, screen wash, wipers etc.

Unawareness of the country's driving style	Be cautious and aware when driving in an unfamiliar country. Some driving styles have a reputation for lack of courtesy at intersections, and drivers often jump red lights and fail to signal. Lane discipline may be very different or non-existent. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Consider undertaking the defensive driving course offered by the STFC. • Consider using public transport or official taxis.

3) Environmental: Climate and Geology

Hazard	Effect and possible Controls for the Hazard
Exposure to unfamiliar or extreme conditions e.g. altitude, hot deserts, frozen climates, monsoon and high humidity	Awareness of the locality and conditions likely to be experienced. For example, STFC staff regularly visit the European Southern Observatory in the Atacama Desert, at high altitude, and where exposure to higher levels of UV radiation occurs. Other sites include frozen climates e.g. Svalbard, where the potential for hyperthermia is possible. When a person is exposed to conditions to which they are not accustomed they can be prone to fatigue and physical stress. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Be aware of the likely environmental conditions you will have to contend with and take appropriate precautions to reduce the risk and mitigate any eventualities. • Be aware of symptoms of High Altitude Illnesses. Acute Mountain Sickness, or worse conditions, can be minimised through acclimatisation at intervening altitudes or prophylaxis such as with acetazolamide. • Exposure to harmful UV radiation (UVA and UVB) is greater at the equator than the poles and also increases approximately 5% for every 300m altitude gain. Appropriate skin and eye protection and limiting exposure time around solar noon will help minimise effects of sunburn and acute keratitis ("snow blindness"). • Check that any medication being taken will not affect sensitivity to UV radiation. • Exposure to high temperatures results in water and electrolyte loss from the body and can lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke, so continual replenishment is important. • Exposure to hot, dry, dusty air may lead to irritation and infection of the eyes and respiratory tract. Avoid contact lenses in order to reduce the risk of eye problems.
Extreme geological events e.g. volcanic eruptions and earthquakes	Be aware of the potential for these extreme events if you are going to travel to such countries as Chile, Japan etc. since they can cause great devastation and loss of life; as well as affecting the local infrastructure after the event. Some consideration should be given to secondary events e.g. tsunami's produced by earthquakes etc. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Be aware of the potential for these hazards and what measures should be taken in the event that you are unfortunate enough to experience such an event. If you have a local contact they should be a good source of information on how to respond. • Follow any advice or instruction given by local civil or military authorities in the event of an emergency. • Consider how you could be extracted from the area in the event of seismic activity.

Extreme climatic events e.g. tidal extremes, storms, typhoons/hurricanes and avalanches.	Be aware of the potential for these extreme climatic events since they can cause great devastation and loss of life; as well as affecting the local infrastructure after the event. Controls to reduce the risk • Avoid travelling to destinations that regularly suffer from these events if possible. • Be aware of what action you should take in the event that you are subject to these extreme conditions. • Follow any advice or instruction given by local civil or military authorities in the event of an emergency.

4) Security

Hazard	**Effect and possible Controls for the Hazard**
Personal Security	The reasonable possibility of crime affecting the individual, involving mainly minor or petty crime. Violent crime is less likely. It may be that there is less robbery late at night, but the crime may tend to become more serious. Controls to reduce the risk • Only use reputable hotels where there should be suitably sufficient risk assessments acceptable to UK standards. • Beware of pickpockets and keep all important documents secure. • Only carry important documents when required or it may be possible to only carry a photocopy. Use the hotel safe if applicable. • Think twice about walking home at night. If you are going a short distance, a taxi is probably a suitable option in unfamiliar territory. • Do not carry large sums of money on you. • Avoid becoming involved in verbal arguments that could escalate into physical violence.
Loss of property	Airports and departure lounges have higher security but personal possessions can be lost or tampered with. Controls to reduce the risk • Luggage and personal possessions should not be left unattended.
Kidnap and terrorism	STFC staff could suffer loss of freedom and be exposed to significant health risks through actions of kidnap or terrorism. Although this should be considered fairly unlikely staff should be aware of measures to keep themselves safe. Controls to reduce the risk • Avoid travelling at night and do not travel alone. • Avoid isolated areas. • Park in well-lit areas and do not pick up strangers. • Vehicle hijacking is a recognised risk in a number of countries. If stopped by armed robbers, make no attempt to resist and keep hands where the attackers can see them at all times.
Drugs	There should be no reason to become involved with either illicit drugs, or those specifically restricted in specific countries, in either their use or transportation. Controls to reduce the risk

	• Do not become involved with drugs of any kind. Penalties can be very severe and convictions for drug offences can lead to imprisonment. • All luggage should be packed by yourself and never carry any items through customs for anyone else.
Civil disturbance	There is always a possibility for persons to be exposed to situations relating to civil disturbance sparked off specific issues or events. Even the UK is not immune to these types of events. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Be aware of issues that could be inflammatory and avoid areas where civil disturbance is occurring or is likely to occur. Newspapers, news reports on television etc. can be helpful in keeping abreast of issues in the country or areas you are or will be visiting. • If you are caught in a civil disturbance follow any advice given by civil enforcement authorities.
Cultural Differences	There are significant cultural issues that could have implications for personal safety; since it could quite easily be possible to cause offence or insult the local population of a country or region e.g. through customs, dress and religion. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Be aware of specific customs etc for which the country has strong commitment and take very seriously. Avoid causing offence even if you disagree with the practices of that country.

5) Food and Drink

Hazard	**Effect and possible Controls for the Hazard**
Allergies	STFC staff may have severe reaction and need treatment. Staff with know allergies should be aware of any potential for coming in to possible contact with the respective agent. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Appropriate treatments should be carried as a precaution should an exposure and subsequent reactions occur. Particular medications may be difficult to acquire in certain countries.
Food poisoning	Consideration should be made to how food is prepared etc. in the country you are visiting. Fruit and vegetables should only be consumed if they have been peeled or cooked. Undercooked meat and fish should not be consumed. Food from street vendors should be avoided as this carries a higher risk of causing ill health. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • If you are purchasing fresh foods and vegetables make sure they are washed thoroughly in clean water, for example bottled water. • Think twice about eating raw seafood shellfish.
Water and fluids	Contaminated drinking water is one of the leading sources of health problems for travellers, and can cause anything from mild gastrointestinal distress to serious bacterial diseases. The most common cause of water-borne illness is bacteria, such

	as E. coli, cholera and salmonella, but illness can also be caused by protozoa (including giardia and cryptosporidium), viruses (like hepatitis A, polio and rotavirus) and chemical pollutants. Mexico is well known for its unsafe water, but according to the CDC, travellers also face high risk in Central America, most of Africa and Asia, and the Middle East. Controls to reduce the risk • Avoid local tap water, unless you are in a country where you know this is clean. • Drink bottled water, making sure the seal is intact and before opening the bottle for the first time. • If you have to drink local water it is best to boil it for at least a minute. • Canned juices, fizzy soda, beer, wine and other alcoholic drinks are usually safe to drink. • Freezing water does not kill bacteria so avoid ice if you are unsure of the source of the water.
Contamination from water and soil	It is possible that a number of diseases and bacteria, e.g. diarrhoea, Legionella, tetanus, E.coli, can be present where contact with water and soil is possible. Controls to reduce the risk • Wash hands well in clean water with suitable soap or cleaning agent prior to handling food which you will eat.

6) Health

Hazard	**Effect and possible Controls for the Hazard**
Working at altitude	STFC staff may suffer effects from working at altitude e.g. fatigue, fainting, breathlessness etc. Controls to reduce the risk • Staff visiting the observatory sites, particularly the ESO Chile and JAC Hawaii, must undertake a high altitude medical prior to travelling, see STFC SHE Code 8 Travel on Council business.
Falling ill or being injured	STFC staff may be hospitalised. Controls to reduce the risk • In the EU staff should carry the appropriate documentation to allow access to medical facilities that are required. • It is possible that staff could be injured or fall ill requiring them to seek medical services. All travellers should carry the details for travel insurance provided to STFC staff travelling on council business. Details of the Insurance cover are provided on the STFC in-focus website: https://staff.stfc.ac.uk/about/gov/Pages/Insurance.aspx
Exposure to viruses, significant	STFC staff could be infected and suffer long term illness. There are a number of modes of transmission i.e. Food bourn and water bourn diseases; vector-bourn diseases, diseases transmitted by animals (zoonoses), sexually transmitted

diseases and parasites. (tetanus, polio, typhus, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, HIV, Lyme's disease, malaria, yellow fever, cholera)	diseases, blood bourn diseases, airborne diseases and diseases transmitted via soil. Malaria is a common and life-threatening disease in many tropical and sub-tropical areas. There are currently over 100 countries or areas at risk of malaria transmission. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • It is important to renew vaccinations against tetanus, polio, typhus, jaundice (hepatitis A) and hepatitis B, if necessary. Outbreaks of typhoid fever and hepatitis are common in the warm season in central Chile (December to March). • Travellers must contact site Occupational Health services to arrange appropriate vaccinations at least 4 to 8 weeks prior to their intended departure to a country where the risk is high. This should allow the necessary time for any vaccinations prescribed by the doctor to take effect. • Immunisation through vaccination and prophylaxis. Immunisation is not a substitute for avoiding potentially contaminated food and water. • For malaria, be aware of the risk, incubation period and possible delayed onset of the main symptoms. Anti malarial drugs (Chemoprophylaxis) may be required to prevent infection developing into a clinical disease. • Medical evacuation (contact details etc. required).
Exposure to blood or other body fluids	Blood transfusion is a life-saving intervention; however, it carries a potential risk of acute or delayed reactions to transmittable infections. Not all developing countries have safe blood and blood products available in all health care facilities. In malaria-endemic areas there is a high risk of acquiring malaria from transfusion. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Travellers should carry a medical card or other document showing their blood group and information about any current medical problems or treatment. • Unnecessary travel should be avoided by those with pre-existing conditions that might require blood transfusion. • Travellers should take all possible precautions to avoid involvement in road traffic accidents or other significant accidental injuries. • Avoid contact between blood and body fluid and damaged skin e.g. cuts, or with mucous membranes. • Avoid injury with needles or sharp instruments contaminated with blood or body fluids.
Prescription medication	Travellers could suffer from not being able to take prescribed medication which is needed to control a diagnosed condition. This could have serious implications and lead to a significantly higher risk of health issues. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Travellers are also advised to take an appropriate supply of any prescription medication; this should be accompanied by a written doctor's instruction, explaining the need for the medication and justifying the quantities required.
Smog and poor air quality	STFC staff, especially those with breathing difficulties or suffer from Asthma. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • This could be a particular problem if the member of staff has any respiratory issues. Different cities can suffer smog conditions at different times of year. A city may declare "pre-emergency" or "emergency" states when the level of smog is dangerously high and takes measures to limit emissions. When the air quality is

	in pre-emergency or emergency state, children, senior citizens and people with respiratory problems should avoid trips to areas at risk of high smog.
Damaged tooth or toothache	Travellers could suffer significant discomfort and pain, resulting in stress, lack of concentration etc. Flying at altitude can cause issues for anyone with a dental abscess. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • If you have any indication of toothache or discomfort it would be advisable to visit a dentist prior to travelling overseas.
Loss or damage of spectacles or contact lenses	STFC staff could become more vulnerable to other hazards if their eye sight is impaired. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • It would be advisable to take an additional pair of spectacles or more than sufficient sets of contact lenses such that any loss or damage does not have significant impact on your visit
Pre-existing medical condition e.g. cardiovascular disorders, chronic hepatitis, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes mellitus, epilepsy etc.	People suffering from underlying chronic illnesses should seek medical advice before planning a journey. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Carry all necessary medication and medical items for the duration of the journey. Prescription medications should be packed in carry-on luggage. However, all airline security requirements will also need to be followed. • Carry the name and contact details of your physician with other travel documents. • A physician's attestation should also be carried, certifying the necessity for any drugs or other medical items carried by the STFC employee that may be questioned by customs officials and/or security personnel. • Confirm whether or not you have adequate health insurance since some countries now require this proof as a condition of entry. Take a copy of the required information. • It is often advisable to have a medical examination on returning from the overseas travel if you suffer from a chronic disease or experience illness in the weeks following the travel.
Psychological health e.g. stress	International travel can often be a stressful experience dealing with the impact of foreign cultures and language, significantly different environments and climate etc. The greater the range of stress factors may result in a greater risk for psychological problems. Mental health resources can vary from country to country. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Take precautions to reduce travel-related stress. This can be done by gathering proper information before travel. This will help maintain self-confidence and cope with the unfamiliar. It will also allow you to develop strategies to minimise risks.

7) Animals, Insects and Parasites

Hazard	**Effect and possible Controls for the Hazard**
Insect, Arachnid or	STFC staff could suffer life threatening conditions from reaction to venom from a bite. STFC staff could suffer stress and discomfort from uncertainties associated with a

similar bites and stings	snake, insect or animal bite to which UK inhabitants are not exposed in everyday life. Envenomation may cause some local tissue necrosis around the bite site and could well lead to serious spreading human tissue destruction (necrosis) or even human death. Neurotoxins in bites and stings will cause weakness and paralysis. Venom contacting the eyes can cause severe damage and may result in blindness. Certain spiders such as Tarantulas have toxins in the hairs covering their bodies which can cause intense irritation on contact with the skin. Controls to reduce the risk • Consult with those familiar with this type of hazard as to measures to avoid contact or medical procedures in the event of a bite. • Make others aware if you are specifically at risk from an allergic response to bites. • Carry any appropriate medication specific to you. • Seek immediate medical attention, especially for snake, scorpion or spider bites/stings, and if possible identify the source of the bite. • Clean with disinfectant and keep any bite wound clean from infection. • Avoid being exposed to these species at night since this is when they are particularly active. • Avoid walking barefoot or in open sandals in terrain where venomous snakes, scorpions or spiders may be present. Wear boots or closed shoes and long trousers. • Avoid direct contact with spiders where there are known to be species of Tarantula. • Certain spiders, e.g. Tarantulas, have toxins in the hairs covering their bodies which can cause intense irritation on contact with the skin.
Contact with dangerous animals.	There are specific areas where STFC staff can come into contact with dangerous animals e.g. polar bears on Svalbard. Controls to reduce the risk • Follow all local rules and advice given by those familiar with the particular animal hazard.
Rabies	Animals suffering from rabies often become aggressive and may attack without provocation. Rabies represents the most important infectious health hazard from animal bites. In many developing countries, rabies is transmitted mainly by dogs, but many other species of mammals can be infected by the rabies virus. Controls to reduce the risk • If a significant risk of exposure to rabies is foreseen, seek medical advice before travelling. • Avoid direct contact with domestic animals in areas where rabies occurs, and with all wild and captive animals. • Seek medical or veterinary advice should be sought about the possibility of rabies in the area. Where a significant risk of rabies exists, the patient should be treated with post-exposure rabies vaccination and immunoglobulin. • A booster dose of tetanus toxoid is also recommended following an animal bite.
Insects and other vectors of disease	Vectors, such as bloodsucking insects, play an essential role in the transmission of many infectious diseases. Typical insect vectors are mosquitoes, bloodsucking flies and ticks. The transmission of many vector-borne diseases is seasonal because of the relationship with rainfall and breeding sites. Controls to reduce the risk • Avoid, if possible, travelling to countries with significant insect vector problems, for example during wet seasons.

	• There is a lower risk of exposure to these insects in urban centres, especially if sleeping in air-conditioned rooms. The exception to this is exposure to dengue fever which is frequent in urban centres in tropical countries. • Use insect repellent containing either DEET or Icaridin. Apply to both exposed skin and clothing. Follow instructions for the application of the repellents. • Use mosquito nets, either with or without insecticide treatment, while sleeping.
Intestinal parasites	Exposure to a number of intestinal parasitic worms, particularly when visiting tropical or subtropical countries. This risk is normally associated with low standards of hygiene and sanitation. Clinical effects may take some time to become apparent. The main intestinal parasites are likely to be; Hookworms, Tapeworms, Roundworms and Whipworms. <u>Controls to reduce the risk</u> • Follow common-sense precautions for avoiding unsafe food and drink. • Only use hotels of sufficient standard that exposure to these parasites is minimised. • Drink only bottled water and clean teeth in bottled water, making sure the seal is intact before opening the bottle for the first time.

Appendix 4 – Example Overseas Travel Risk Assessment

https://www.she.stfc.ac.uk/Pages/SC08%20-%20Appendix%204%20-%20Example%20Overseas%20Travel%20Risk%20Assessment.pdf

Appendix 5 – Overseas Travel Risk Assessment Template

https://www.she.stfc.ac.uk/Pages/SC08%20-%20Appendix%205%20-%20Overseas%20Travel%20Risk%20Assessment%20Template.pdf

Appendix 6 – Guidance for Staff Visiting High Altitude Locations

1. Introduction

1.1 There may be occasions when staff are required to visit / work at a location which is at high altitude (i.e. over 10,000 feet). It is essential to assess an individual's fitness prior to travel, given the possible risks to health that ascent to high altitude may impose.

2. Background

2.1 At altitudes of 10,000 feet (or more) the ambient partial pressure of oxygen can be less than 70% of the sea level value. This affects people in different ways and there are certain dangers which should be clearly understood. For brief visits of a few hours duration there is no significant medical risk for adults in normal good health, although the majority of people do experience some discomfort. The most common symptom is shortness of breath but this is very rarely severe and most people overcome this fairly easily. The next most prominent complaint is headache, which usually develops only after several hours at high altitude; it can be severe.

Other high altitude complaints, such as lethargy, giddiness, insomnia, etc. affect fewer people (less than 20%). The severity of the symptoms usually increases after several hours at the summit. After 24 hours at high altitude the incidence and severity of symptoms start to diminish.

2.2 On rare occasions individuals can exhibit signs of high altitude pulmonary oedema or high altitude cerebral oedema; these are potentially fatal conditions and must be treated by taking the affected person back to sea level without delay. The altitude may also aggravate pre-existing cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. One of the problems is that the sufferer may not be fully aware of the seriousness of the situation and it may be necessary for others to decide that retreat to a lower level is necessary.

2.3 High altitude facilities often employ a mid-level facility where visitors en-route to the summit are advised to take a break for at least 30 minutes. Those visiting such locations should ensure they maintain their levels of hydration.

2.4 It should be noted that children under sixteen years of age are particularly susceptible to the effects of low oxygen pressure and should not be encouraged to visit. Pregnant women are also at risk at high altitude. In general, any adults with known heart disease, lung disease, high blood pressure or who suffer from frequent severe headaches should not ascend higher than the mid level facility.

3. Rules for STFC staff travelling to high altitude

3.1 It is mandatory for STFC staff required to visit or work at a high altitude (in excess of 10,000 feet) to undergo a full medical examination to certificate their fitness to undertake this visit. Examinations will be arranged through Site Occupational Health and/or Safety Advisers and HR sections for which at least six weeks' notice should be given prior to the date of travel. The high altitude fitness medical comprises the following:

- Health and Lifestyle consultation;
- Blood tests, if they have not already been carried out by the General Practitioner;
- Ultrasound of the carotid arteries and abdominal aorta;

- Ultrasound of the heart;
- Vascular screening of the abdominal organs (kidney size, abdominal aorta calibre);
- 12 lead resting ECG;
- 12 lead exercise tolerance test;
- Spirometry;
- Post screening consultation;
- Lifestyle and/or treatment recommendations; and
- Full written report and follow up consultation if required

3.2 A confidential report will be provided to the individual covering the outcome of the examination together with a certificate confirming that the individual is fit to travel to altitude. A copy of this certificate should be passed to the relevant high altitude facility Safety Adviser/HR advisors as proof of fitness

3.3 Any member of staff who does not pass the appropriate medical examination will not be allowed to visit or work at a high altitude location.

3.4 The fitness of staff to visit and/or work at high altitude should be reviewed and/or re-assessed annually, regardless of age, in case there is an unexpected change in medical status which might affect the risk to the individual. However, frequency of testing will ultimately be at site discretion.

4. Non-STFC staff - visitors and observers

4.1 Medical opinion is unequivocal in stating that all visitors to a high altitude location (including short-term visitors of three hours or less and all observers) should also undergo a full assessment by their own GP, who should be familiar with the risks of altitude, before such a visit takes place. As such, all visitors are asked to sign a medical disclaimer stating that they fully understand the risks of ascending to altitude and acknowledging the recommendation to seek medical assurance of fitness prior to travel.

Appendix 7 – Guidance on What to Do When an Emergency Situation Occurs

During the event

In the event of an emergency situation occurring (whether it be assault, sexual assault, drink spiking, robbery, etc.), make yourself safe in the first instance and get yourself to a safe location, whether it be by returning to your hotel, a nearby safe place, or the British Embassy, Commission, or Consulate. **Please note that Embassy, Commission, or Consulate buildings are not always open 24/7**. If required, dial the emergency number for your chosen country and seek the help of the emergency services. Remember, RUN, HIDE, TELL (Figure 1).



Figure 1: "RUN, HIDE, TELL" guidance promoted by National Counter Terrorism Security Office in the event of an emergency.

Please note that British embassies and consulates are generally **NOT able to provide financial assistance** to British nationals abroad. They focus on offering support and advice, but they cannot pay bills or provide money. In exceptional circumstances, they might help facilitate funds from friends or relatives or provide a loan to help you return to the UK if all other options have been exhausted. In this case, travel insurance will be required to help in the event of financial difficulties. International SOS can help to arrange emergency travel back home and with financial costs if needed.

After the event

Report any emergency situation to your Line Manager, through the International SOS app, and to your host immediately (once it is safe to do so). If required, dial the emergency number for your chosen country and seek the help of the emergency services. Remember, RUN, HIDE, TELL (Figure 1).

Online guidance

For any further advice and information regarding an emergency situation arising whilst travelling, and especially when travelling abroad, please consult the following webpages.

British Embassy, Commissions and Consulates

- Find a British embassy, high commission or consulate - GOV.UK

Rape and Sexual Assault

- Victim of rape and sexual assault abroad - GOV.UK
- Support after rape or sexual assault abroad: advice by country - GOV.UK
- Helpline, Live Chat, Text Support | Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis SCIO

Dangerous occurrences

- Kidnappings or hostages abroad - GOV.UK
- MI Bootleg Alcohol Prevention Brochure V12

Reporting a Crime

- Reporting a crime abroad and getting help - GOV.UK

Further advice

- Foreign travel advice - GOV.UK – emergency travel numbers
- Reduce your risk from terrorism while abroad - GOV.UK
- Stay Safe Abroad with RUN HIDE TELL | ProtectUK
- Reduce your risk from terrorism while abroad - GOV.UK
- Foreign travel advice - GOV.UK – subscribe alerts
- ProtectUK | Home
- NaTHNaC - Personal safety
- Staying safe on holiday | ABTA
- Transport Safety | Suzy Lamplugh Trust
- Support for British nationals abroad - GOV.UK

SHE Online Totora training course

There is also an optional training course on Totora titled “Personal Travel Safety”. Whilst this course is not compulsory, it can be used as a good basis to remind yourself of

- The risks involved when travelling for business; including
    - Accidents;
    - Health and wellbeing;
    - Crime;
    - Terrorism;
    - Security;
    - Weather; and
    - Infrastructure disruptions.
- Planning for your journey,
- What to consider before you travel;
- What to consider whilst abroad;
- Personal Safety considerations;
- Staying aware and safe when away from home;
- Learn how to drive safely and act as a usual reminder of safe driving practices;
- What to do in the occasion when plans change

It also covers different elements of travel, such as:

- Climate;
- Local customs;
- Dress;
- Attitude/body language;
- Food and drink, etc.

- Modes of Transport and risks associated
- First Aid
- Anti-social behaviour
- Mobile phone use and coverage
- Accommodation

International SOS

International SOS can alert travellers to ongoing emergency situations abroad. Please ensure that you allow notifications on your phone from International SOS and that you have this as a truster contact in your Outlook email. In order to set up travel alerts, and to receive notifications of events occurring in either the UK or where you are travelling to, please visit this webpage and set up alerts for chosen destinations.

To download the International SOS app, please consult the UKRI poster (Figure 2). Please ensure that this app is downloaded onto your work phone. Please also check that you can log into the app and uses its features, and enables alerts and notifications from this app, before you commence your journey.



Figure 2: Guidance on how to download the International SOS app

International SOS also offer online courses (Figure 3) that cover a vast range of travel guidance, including driving abroad, medical advice, and guidance on how to use the International SOS app. To view these courses, visit this webpage and set up an account using the register option. The compulsory courses listed at the top of the website are recommended for all staff.

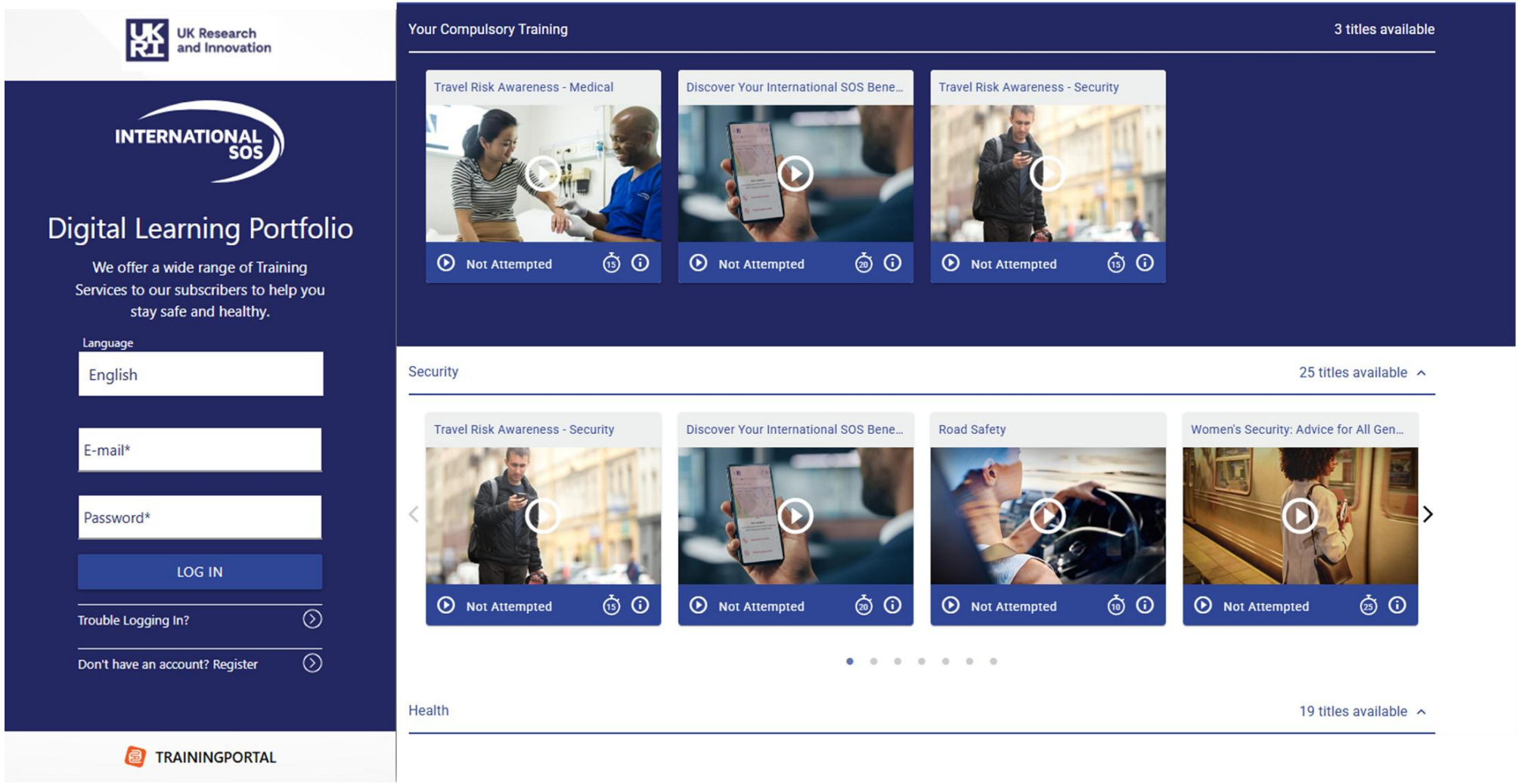


Figure 3: View of the Digital Training Portfolio sign-in page for International SOS and the training course front page. The compulsory courses are listed at the top of the webpage.

Appendix 8 – Guidance for Lone Travelers

Travelling alone can pose its own extra risks, especially those of protected characteristics which may appear more vulnerable, regardless of whether it occurs within the UK or abroad.

When planning foreign travel, consider your own circumstances, disabilities and needs. Do you have all of the resources you need in the event of an incident occurring?

When lone travelling, it is strongly advised to read the Travel Advice for the country or territory you are visiting. We also urge all STFC staff to sign up for International SOS email alerts to get the latest updates regarding any changes in safety or circumstances within your country.

Read the foreign travel checklist with advice from the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to help you prepare for foreign travel and stay safe abroad. The FDCO has foreign travel advice for each country across the world, and these should be consulted before travelling abroad.

The FCDO have created specialised webpages that advise UK travellers how to travel safely when travelling alone. Please consult these webpages if any of these apply to yourself and ensure that any advice applicable to you is noted within your risk assessment.

Online resources

- Solo and independent travel - GOV.UK
- Advice for women travelling abroad - GOV.UK
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender: foreign travel advice - GOV.UK
- Disability and travel abroad - GOV.UK
- Victim of rape and sexual assault abroad - GOV.UK
- Transport Safety | Suzy Lamplugh Trust

Appendix 9 – Guidance on Personal Safety Whilst Travelling on Council Business

There is also an optional training course on Totora titled "Personal Travel Safety" (Figure 1). Whilst this course is not compulsory, we urge all travellers within STFC to undertake this course, as it covers:

- The risks involved when travelling for business; including
  - Accidents;
  - Health and wellbeing;
  - Crime;
  - Terrorism;
  - Security;
  - Weather; and
  - Infrastructure disruptions.
- Planning for your journey,
- What to consider before you travel;
- What to consider whilst abroad;
- Personal Safety considerations;
- Staying aware and safe when away from home;
- Learn how to drive safely and act as a usual reminder of safe driving practices;
- What to do in the occasion when plans change

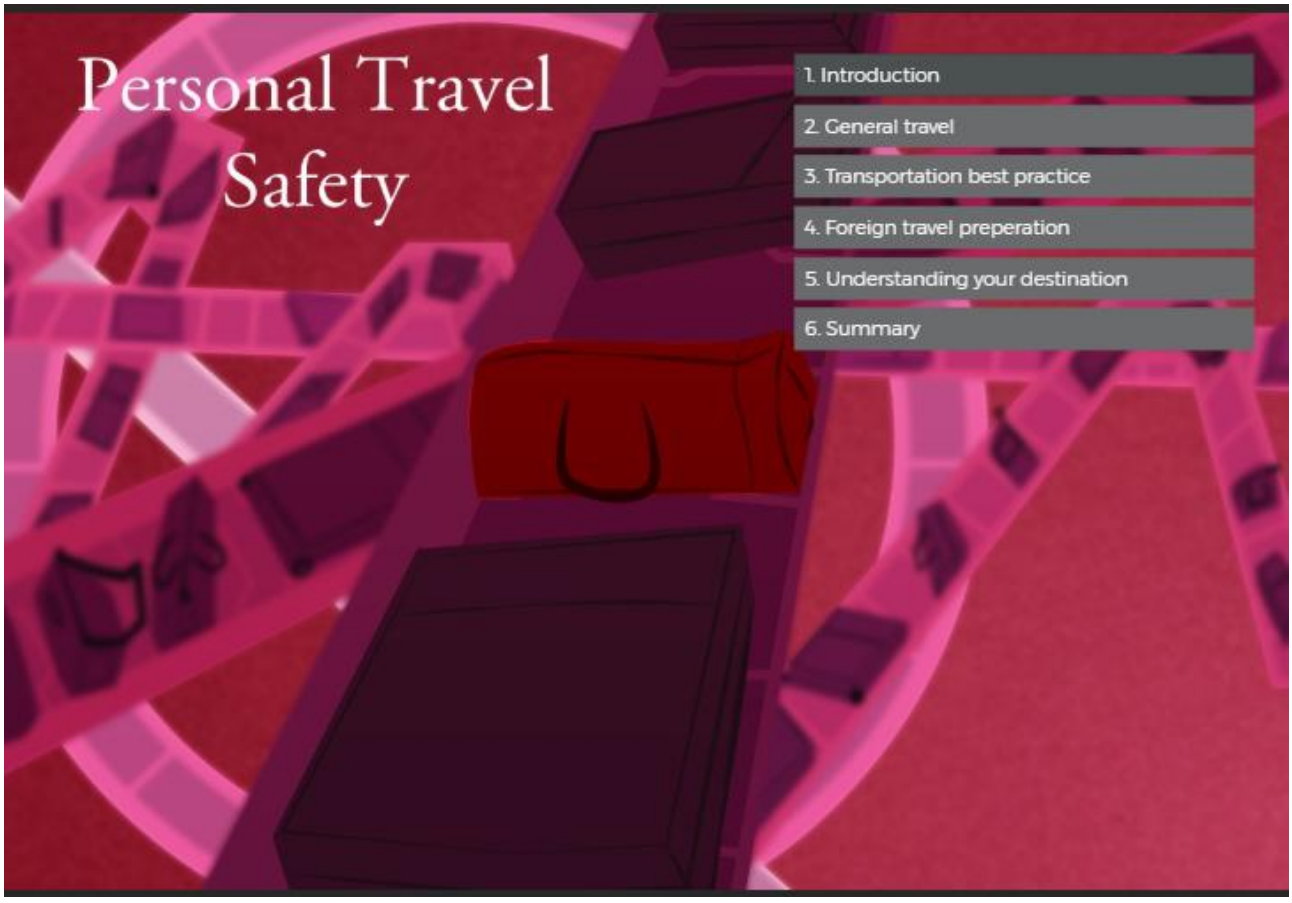


Figure 1: Overview of the 'Personal Safety Course' offered on Totora

Appendix 10 – Travel Risk Ratings

Security Risk Rating	Medical Risk Rating	Travel must be authorised by	Training and Pre-Trip Briefing	Tracking & Communication	Other Measures
Extreme	Very High	STFC Executive Chair or Chief Operating Officer	Int SOS Travel Awareness (Medical, Security & Higher Risk) Destination specific briefing	Logged Itinerary Pre-arranged check-in contact Active monitoring tracker device	Specialist Advice (FCDO & Int SOS) As identified in Risk Assessment (only if granted permission to travel)
High	High	Department Director	Int SOS Travel Awareness (Medical, Security & Higher Risk) Destination specific briefing	Logged Itinerary Pre-arranged check-in contact Active monitoring tracker device	As Identified in Risk Assessment (FCDO & Int SOS)
Medium	Variable	Line Manager	Int SOS Travel Awareness (Medical, Security & Higher Risk) Destination specific briefing	Logged Itinerary Pre-arranged check-in contact	As Identified in Risk Assessment
Low	Medium	Line Manager	Int SOS Travel Risk Awareness (Medical & Security)	Logged Itinerary	Not required
Insignificant	Low	Line Manager	Int SOS Travel Risk Awareness (Medical & Security)	Logged Itinerary	Not required

Appendix 11 – Training

Role	Initial Training	Refresher Training	Frequency	Comments
High mileage drivers > 6,000 business miles. As identified by Business Support Manager	½ day STFC Defensive Driving course	½ day STFC Defensive Driving course	5 yearly	
Travellers to **Low and Insignificant** Security Risk Rating Countries	International SOS Travel Risk Awareness - Security Travel Risk Awareness - Medical 30 minutes each	Totara course titled "Personal Travel Safety"	Prior to first travel 5 yearly	Int SOS Travel Training Hub Then select the appropriate International SOS training package(s).
Travellers to **Medium, High and Extreme** Security Risk Rating Countries	International SOS Travel Awareness - Higher Risk. 30 minutes. International SOS Training packages relevant to planned travel and destination.	Prior to each trip	Prior to each trip	Int SOS Travel Training Hub Then select the appropriate International ISOS training package(s).

Appendix 12 – Audit Checklist

Ref.	Item	Rating	Comments
1 (Section 4.1.5)	Have all staff driving on council business (hire, lease or own car) been given a 'Permit to Drive'?		
2 (Section 4.1.9)	Have all high mileage drivers attended the Defensive Driving Course?		
3 (Section 4.1.25)	On occasions where travel has occurred to countries that the FCO advises against "all travel" or "all but essential business travel", is there any documented Executive Chair or COO approval?		
4 (Section 4.1.33)	Have travel related SHE incidents been reported in Evotix Assure? Is this consistent with vehicle accident insurance and medical claims?		
5 (Section 4.5.1)	Has the mileage of STFC drivers been reviewed in the past 12 months to determine high mileage drivers?		
6 (Section 4.2.1)	Have Risk Assessments been conducted for any overseas travel? Risk assessments reviewed by Line Managers?		

Appendix 13 – Document Retention Policy

Records Established	Minimum Retention Period	Responsible Record keeper	Location of Records	Comments/Justification
Travel Risk Assessments	Current + 5 years	Line management	SHE Assure	SHE Group maintain Evotix Assure Facility
Permits to Drive	Current + 5 Years	Site Operations	Local records systems	HR