



Your Driver & Drivers Hours

Your driver plays a very important role in the smooth running of your journey. For the majority of your journey, not only is he/she driving and navigating, but also caring for you and your luggage. But the main and most important duty they have is to maintain your safety at all times whilst travelling with eddie brown tours.

Drivers Hours

If you are planning a Tour itinerary the number of hours that a driver can drive in one session and in one day needs to be taken into consideration. Our Operations Department has lots of experience in planning itineraries, which will help you to get the most from the places that you wish to visit, whilst also taking into account how many hours a day your driver would be working.

From April 2007, there have been major changes to the Rules and Regulations governing the work and rest patterns for coach drivers operating Tours and Private Hires throughout Europe. The changes have had a significant impact on the planning of Tours in particular.

At eddie brown tours we have produced this fact sheet to help any Group organiser to plan their itinerary more effectively.

Why the Rules Have Changed

The Law affecting coach driver's work is set by the European Union. The old Rules had stood for over 20 years but are no longer compatible with the New Digital Tachographs that are now being introduced. The European Parliament is trying to improve drivers working conditions.

Driving Hours

The basic rule is; drivers must take a break of 45 minutes after 4.5 hours continuous driving. However, the break can be split into two parts - the first a minimum of 15 minutes, and a second a minimum of 30 minutes. The maximum driving is 9 hours per day which can be extended to 10 hours twice in any fixed week. The total weekly driving is 56 hours per week, and a maximum of 90 hours in any two consecutive weeks.

Daily Rest

Normally this must be at least 11 hours, giving the driver a maximum working day of 13 hours, but this can be reduced to 9 hours rest, no more than 3 times a week, which gives the driver a maximum working day of 15 hours. If double manned (2 drivers) their maximum working day is 21 hours.

Weekly Rest

The main difference with the new Rules and Regulations affects the weekly rest, i.e. now drivers are required to take a weekly rest period after no more than 6 x 24 hour periods of their last weekly rest. The old "12 day Rule" has been abolished. The weekly rest period is normally 45 hours, but this can be reduced to 24 hours once every two weeks, provided the shortfall is repaid in full in one single payback within three weeks. During this rest period a driver is not permitted to undertake any other duties at all, including acting as a courier/tour guide. They cannot even travel home as a passenger on board the coach as this is classed as "other work".

Working With the New Rules

Multi-day Tours are particularly affected. Some ways of managing the changes include;

Scheduling a "free" day when the coach and driver are not required
or

Paying for an additional driver to travel out to meet the tour coach, to either cover that day's journey or to permit the other driver to return home for his weekly rest period.

Either way this has an implication on cost, which is through no fault of the Coach Operator.

Obligation of Tour Operators

The new rules make tour organiser's jointly liable with the operator for planning schedules that meet the New Law.

It is a good idea to either pre-book or at least discuss your itinerary with our staff, to avoid situations where you require the coach and driver but cannot do so because of the driver reaching his/her maximum working period for that day or for his/her working week. For further advice on drivers hours, please speak to our Operations Staff.

Good Communication

Your driver is an essential part of your tour, making sure you get to where you want to go, and on time. Communicating with and involving your driver in key discussions is often welcomed by your driver, who can then share his/her experience and knowledge with you where appropriate.

Safety and Peace of Mind

The driver's number one priority is getting you and your group to your destination safely. Whilst travelling, please try to remember not to disturb your driver unless necessary and to remain in your seat wearing your seat belt which is a Legal requirement. Before departure your driver will give a Safety briefing informing you where Emergency exits etc are on the coach.

All our drivers are CRB checked with North Yorkshire County Council before being employed, licences are checked twice a year, and every driver attends our In house Training and also Driver CPC Training on a yearly basis to maintain the highest standards possible for you the customer.