



EU Drivers' Hours Regulations – A Guide for the Touring Industry

From April 11th 2007 the rules governing working hours for drivers of goods and passenger vehicles changed. Although the rules were simplified, many exemptions and derogations were removed and liabilities were extended. This guide is intended to outline the regulations that affect anyone responsible for planning tours or managing drivers of goods vehicles.

All drivers **must** now have at least two 45 hour, and one 24 hour break over a rolling 3 week period. The driver may not exceed 6 days of work without at least one of these breaks.

A few key points

- The liability to penalties under the new regulations lies not only with the operator and driver but with all those responsible for scheduling.
- The new regulations allow for penalties to be imposed in any territory rather than the home territory of the operator or the territory where an infringement takes place.
- It has already been known for drivers to be forced to take breaks when an infringement has been discovered.
- To keep yourself safe from penalties and your show on the road, value the advice given by your transport provider.
- The regulations governing weekly rest will mean that 'double drivers' will be required more frequently, increasing costs of travel and accommodation.

Weekly rest – The rules

A key issue for the touring industry is the new requirements for weekly rest including where and how that rest is taken.

A weekly rest period shall start no later than at the end of six 24-hour periods from the end of the previous weekly rest period.

In any two consecutive weeks (a week is defined as 00.00 on Monday to 24.00 on Sunday) a driver shall take at least:

Two regular weekly rest periods (of at least 45 hours each) OR

One regular weekly rest period and one reduced weekly rest period of at least 24 hours.

A weekly rest period that falls in two weeks may be counted in either week but not in both

Any reductions shall be compensated by an equivalent period of rest taken en bloc before the end of the third week in which the reduction occurred. Rest taken as compensation must be attached to another rest period of at least 9 hours

The above synopsis is intended to clarify why there may be an increased need for extra drivers; your supplier will be equipped with the additional information needed for a specific schedule.

The UK Department for Transport has developed full guidance on how to comply with the regulations; they are available on the web at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/freight/road/workingtime/rdtransportworkingtimeguidance>