The hardest thing to see is what is in front of your
This booklet is about FOCUS.

By improving your focus when driving, you can become more alert and aware. If you practise how to spot, understand and anticipate dangers, you can become not just a good driver, but an outstanding one.

This booklet tells you how.
There are three levels to having good FOCUS

**Notice**
This involves using all your senses to gather as much relevant information about your situation as possible. You need to know where to look, while keeping your senses open so that you can spot anything potentially hazardous.

**Think**
You then need to make sense of what you see, hear and feel. You do this by weighing up the significance of everything around you. But sometimes we decide what something means too early or we ignore something that we can’t make sense of.

**Anticipate**
This is the highest level of FOCUS and takes the most practice. Predicting what might happen helps us make the right decisions. Drivers who are good at anticipating often have more time to act when things go wrong.

**Putting it all together**
When you put the three levels together, your driving becomes more focused – you will feel sharper and find it easier to stay ‘switched on’.

Many things can blur your FOCUS.

Here are some tips for staying sharp.
distractions
If you’re distracted by things around you…

– keep your desk clear of clutter, eg loose papers and other distractions
– mentally ‘shut out’ passenger noise from the adjoining carriage
– with other incidents involving the public (eg kids throwing stones, abusive passengers), plan to report the incident, compose yourself, then move on
– talk to yourself about the previous signal aspect, where you are, what’s going to happen next (risk-triggered commentary).
OBSERVE RED SIGNAL
APPLY BRAKES
ACKNOWLEDGE AWS
LAMINATE KITCHEN FLOOR
MAPLE OR OAK?
WHAT AM I DOING?
If you’re distracted by thoughts...

– ‘park’ the thought – file it away to deal with AFTER the journey and don’t let it back into your mind until then
– get advice about ongoing sources of stress, whether at work or at home – your manager can help
– use ‘risk-triggered commentary’. Talk aloud about your signal aspects and what’s coming up.
When your focus blurs:

– look ahead, then all around
– change your focus from close-up to wide-angle and back again
– scan across the track in steps
– use your peripheral vision
– look out for items that you recognise (the house you’ll buy when you win the Lottery!)
– know your route – practise it in your head
– use sounds and feeling to identify your location
– watch out for anything out of the ordinary.
Where’s your focus now?
When you can’t remember the last signal...

– use the ‘feeling drowsy’ techniques below
– remember how and when you lost FOCUS – watch out for it happening again in the same conditions
– use all your senses to help you stay aware of your surroundings. *Listen* to the train, *feel* the bumps on the track – even *smell* the air around you.
When there’s lots to focus on...

- practise dual focus – keeping tabs on one thing while still scanning the track for other information
- avoid giving too much attention to one task at the expense of another task (eg in a difficult shunt manoeuvre, take care not to miss a stop aspect)
- acknowledge, but don’t be distracted by, track workers
- watch out for anything out of the ordinary
- expect the unexpected.
Notice

Stop

Obtain token and permission to proceed

Welshpool
When you notice something puzzling...

- don’t dismiss it!
- be prepared for the worst-case scenario
- look for ALL the possible explanations
  - there may be several
- be systematic; check and check again
- if in doubt, contact the signaller.
What else could this mean?
When you think you know what’s going to happen next…

– you might be wrong
– think the worst
– be prepared to take alternative action
– allow time to stop – you might expect a signal to clear, but what if it doesn’t?

– know your route – where are you stopping? Are you sure?
Check off your stations
– highlight relevant items in the Weekly Operating Notice.
Wake up!
When you feel drowsy...

- talk or sing aloud
- drink some water
- eat something
- open a window
- take deep breaths
- move about
- move your eyes – focus on close then distant objects.
When you’re under time pressure...

- keep a clear head
- time is secondary to safety
- stay alert – good FOCUS leads to more flowing driving.
Don’t let it happen to you!

- We all let our FOCUS drop occasionally.
- Most of the time we get away with it.
- But just once could be one time too many. Always think the worst.
- Find ways of staying in FOCUS that work for you.
- Then USE THEM!
- Talk to your manager if you want to know more.
SEEING IS USELESS WITHOUT FOCUS
The hardest thing to see is what is in front of your