These notes are designed to help you give the ‘FOCUS’ presentation to your drivers.

On each page, you will see a small reproduction of each slide, accompanied by some bullet-pointed notes.

The bullet points are prompts to help you decide what to say. If you’re stuck, you can read these bullets directly. But a much better approach is to find your own words to get the information across. That way, the presentation sounds natural and is easier to remember.

You don’t need to read the words on the screen – allow drivers to do that for themselves.

The slides are deliberately thought-provoking. They’re designed to complement the key messages and hold drivers’ attention while you’re speaking.

If you lose your place or your train of thought, skip to the next bold subheading in these notes – these are your ‘signposts’.

Add in your own ideas, examples and anecdotes. There are key places for doing this, or use any other white space on the page! Using your own examples will make the presentation more interesting and relevant to you AND your drivers.

Don’t dwell too long on any one slide, keep moving on. Some slides only need to be shown for a few seconds. Aim for an average of one minute per slide.

Practise the presentation beforehand.

The presentation would take around 30 minutes with no driver input but could take up to an hour if you elicit lots of feedback. We would suggest that about 40 minutes would be optimal.
Give people a chance to find the word

After people have identified the word click to move onto the next slide.

Your notes
Slide 4

SEEING IS USELESS WITHOUT FOCUS

Explain why you’ve decided to show this presentation

For example, not having FOCUS increases the risk of SPADS, station overruns, speeding, TPWS interventions, buffer stop incidents, etc.

This presentation is about:

- improving your FOCUS when driving
- so that you can become more aware of your situation
- and spot dangers earlier
- to become not just a good driver, but an outstanding driver
- This presentation combines some common sense information that you’ll know already with some ideas which might be new to you.
- And it packages it all together in a way that makes it easy to remember when you need to.
- There are also lots of opportunities for us to share our own ideas with each other.
Let the animation run...

What does FOCUS mean?

- Keeping a sharp mental focus – staying alert.
- Keeping the right visual focus – looking in the right places at the right times.
- Focusing on the right things – not being distracted.

Losing FOCUS is a common problem:

- Let’s admit it; we all have trouble staying focused when we’re driving.
- It’s easy to let things like tiredness, stress, personal problems or plain boredom distract us.
- But, potentially, only a split second of inattention at the wrong moment could cause a full-scale disaster.
- There is no margin for error.
- So we’re going to look at some ways of staying in focus – sharp and switched on.

Explain about the FOCUS animation:

- We’re going to see the animation we saw just now several more times in this presentation.
  It’s going to help you draw together everything we talk about so that you can turn FOCUS into a habit.
- You’re going to see the word ‘FOCUS’ a lot around work over the next few weeks.

Explain about the physical cue

- To help remember about FOCUS when you need to, some people find it useful to have a physical cue that they can use every time they find their focus slipping.
- This needs to be something you can do while driving (eg clicking fingers/stamping foot).
- While you’re sitting here, see if you can think of something you could use.
- It doesn’t have to be something people can see you doing – you just have to be able to feel it.

- Imagine yourself using it as you listen to this presentation, then try it out next time you’re in the cab, to see if it helps.
- Doing this helps your subconscious mind link the cue with the very practical advice we’re going to talk about today so that you can remember the right things at the right time.
- At the same time as clicking your fingers, or whatever you’ve chosen to do, you could try saying the word “FOCUS” out loud or to yourself.
- Many drivers use this technique, in one form or another.
- People in other professions, too, find it helps them to access a whole range of inner resources when they need them – not just concentration.

Ask the driver’s what they do to help keep their FOCUS.

Show them what physical cues they should use when they’re needed.
How do you notice when you’re losing FOCUS?

Get input from participants:

- Your mind wanders – you start to daydream.
- Your breathing and heart rate have slowed down.
- Your blink rate has slowed or your eyelids droop.
- You yawn.
- You’re sitting more slumped.
- You’re slower to react to things like the AWS.
- You are surprised to see something you should have noticed earlier – “Where did that come from?”
- You can’t remember something that has just happened, such as the aspect of the previous signal.

These things are more of a problem when:

- you’re tired
- you’re stressed
- you’re bored

Add in your own danger points to draw out:

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We don't want to dwell on being 'out of FOCUS'

- Instead, think of a time when you are really 'switched on' – alert and aware of your surroundings.
- For example: when driving really well, in perfect conditions, after a good night’s rest, your favourite shift and route, lovely weather, etc.
- Think of it now.
- Next time you feel yourself going out of FOCUS, try re-living this ‘switched on’ moment and use that physical cue we were talking about earlier.

Click the next slide to repeat the FOCUS animation.

Your notes
Give people a chance to remember their cue

There we have it again – FOCUS.

As soon as the animation finishes, click the next slide.
Explain there are three stages to having good FOCUS

Stage 1: Notice

- This means using all your senses – in particular sight, hearing and feel – to gather as much relevant information about your situation as possible.
- You need to know what to focus on, where to look, etc.
- We'll discuss this more in a minute.

Stage 2: Think

- This means making sense of what you notice.
- You often do this subconsciously, but sometimes we decide what something means too early…
- … or we ignore something we can’t make sense of (taking too narrow a focus).
- This can lead to SPADs, failure to call or station overrun.

Stage 3: Anticipate

- This means think ahead.
- This skill takes time to perfect.
- Thinking ahead helps us make the right decisions.
- Drivers who are good at thinking ahead have more time to act when things go wrong.

Putting it all together

- When you put the three stages together, your driving can become more confident, smooth and flowing.
- The actual task of driving can also become more engaging.

Let's look at each stage in more detail, starting with ‘Notice’.

Click for 2nd bullet.

Click for 3rd bullet.

Aim to finish this section by _____ mins (approx 8 mins from start).
Slide 10

Stage 1: Notice

You need to actively notice:

- If you wait for hazards to become obvious, you will spot them too late.
- Take an imaginary camera and look for things to FOCUS on.
- Change your focus from wide to narrow – look for small details and the big picture.
- In some places, you will know what to look for, such as a signal around the next bend.
- At all times, you need to watch out for the unexpected, eg vandals, trespassers or track workers.
- You also need to keep several pieces of information in mind at once, eg while waiting for a signal to clear, still monitor the area for other warning signs.

The more you notice, the better you can understand what’s going on around you.

Your notes

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Small changes are hard to spot

Explain ‘change blindness’:

- Noticing hazards is difficult because our brains prefer to look for things that are familiar, not things that are new or that have changed.

- This is called ‘change blindness’.

- Look at this example on the screen. How quick were you to spot what has changed?

Your notes
Another change blindness example

Can you see what’s changed in this example?

Comment on their reactions:

It’s scary when you don’t notice something so big straight away!

And this is a static picture – imagine that you’re in a moving train. How far might you have travelled before spotting the change?

Click for next slide.
Spot the hazard

- As well as missing small changes, it's easy for your focus to be 'pulled' in the wrong direction.

- This can make you miss something important.

- This picture was taken moments before the driver applied the emergency brake.

- What caused the driver to brake? (Don't wait for their answer – they won't get it!)

Ask how many people spotted the various hazards.
Give answer below

A cow in the field ahead pushed out onto the track. The driver was watching the track workers and the signal, and didn't notice the broken fence.

Let's look at some tips for getting really quick at noticing things.

Give any examples of your own, where a driver's FOCUS has been pulled by the wrong thing:

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Firstly: Scan the track

- The best way to keep your search for information active is to scan the track ahead.
- Talk to yourself as you do it – say what you’re seeing.
- Move your focus from the most immediate sight to other, less noticeable or less threatening ones.
- Practise dual focus – look ahead while also keeping an eye on things around you.
- Pretend you’re using a video camera to make a film and at the same time, taking still pictures of the small details.
- Try moving your focus in and out to look at closer, then more distant things (using a close-up, then a wide-angled lens)
- Acknowledge things that jump into your peripheral vision: they might be important.
- To keep alert, look for other landmarks that you recognise as a potential distraction.
- On your next journey, try using these scanning techniques for at least 20 minutes.

It might be tiring at first, but with practice, it becomes something you can do automatically for a whole journey.

Add in any other scanning strategies you know of. Ask participants what scanning strategies they use.

Of course no one scanning strategy is better than any other. Try out which works best for you, or swap and change between the different methods. All that matters is that you keep searching for information.
Secondly: Grow your memory

- The more you can remember about your route, the more awareness you will have of it.

- We need to remember what’s important and delete what is not; don’t empty or clutter your mind.

- Every time you drive a route, try to build up more knowledge about it.

- If you re-run a recent journey in your mind, how much can you remember about it?

- Try to make your memories of each route as vivid as possible.

- Remember in colour, and add in sounds, smells and physical feelings as well.
Thirdly: Avoid distractions

Question: tell me what you think is a distraction

Ask participants what they find distracting and how they deal with it.

Distractions can pull focus and prevent you from noticing something in time.

- Mentally shut out passenger noise from the adjoining carriage.
- Don’t let loose objects roll around the cab.
- ‘Park’ any worrying thoughts and address them later.
- Practise ways of composing yourself when something unsettling happens.
- Talk to me/your DSM if work or personal problems are bothering you.
- Don’t focus on one potential hazard at the expense of missing another.

Insert your own anecdotes about times when drivers have been distracted:

A real example from a driver:

“I was distracted once, I passed a platform I was distracted by some P’way men working ... one of them pulled a piece of paper out of an envelope as I went past, and that small action made me think ‘what’s he doing?’, but it was enough to make me put the brake in too late and not stop at the platform. If you are going 90 miles an hour, you can go a long way in three seconds.”

What was the distraction here; P’way man or the piece of paper?
Finally: Use all your senses

Don’t just use your eyes to notice things. The best drivers focus on all their senses, for example:

- the sound and feel of the train as you pass over a bridge
- the smell of an upcoming pig farm
- the bumpy feel of a particularly old section of track
- the jolt of a set of points
- or maybe you’d notice the absence of a sound or smell.

If you notice something that might be wrong on the track, report it!

Tell them who to report things to within your TOC/depot.

Ask participants for their own non-visual cues or insert your own:

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And talking of cues, here’s the FOCUS one again…

Click on the next slide to run the animation again.

Aim to finish this section by ___ mins (approx 20 mins from start)
Give people a chance to remember their cue

There we have it again – FOCUS.

As soon as the animation finishes, click the next slide.
Stage 2: Think

- Noticing is not enough by itself.

- You have to interpret, understand and generally think about the information you’re getting.

- For example, seeing an upcoming bridge is not enough – you need to also evaluate the possibility of something falling from it, what is behind it, etc.

With all the technical safety features and comfort offered by our trains today, it is easy to go into ‘autopilot’ and stop thinking about what we’re doing.

Let’s look at some of the common mistakes we make when we fail to think…
Some of the common mistakes

The most common mistake is getting side-tracked by other thoughts.

- It happens very easily.
- You can lose track of what you’ve just done and what you need to do next.
- Even a few seconds can make a big difference.
- In particular, it’s easy to acknowledge the AWS without thinking why.

Insert any examples or anecdotes from your experience:

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Sometimes we make snap judgements

- We decide what something means too early, and ignore other factors which might lead us to a different conclusion.

- Once you see something one way, it's difficult to see it differently.

- If you have time to think, use it.

- Run through possible scenarios in your head.
We also tend to block things out that puzzle or confuse us

- The human brain doesn’t like uncertainty.
- We prefer to ignore confusing information or convince ourselves there’s nothing to worry about.
- BUT – contradictory information is often the first sign that something is wrong.
- When this happens, it’s important to stay focused, assess ALL the information and work out ALL the possible causes.

Here’s an example:

- You’re waiting to move off during a complicated shunting manoeuvre.
- You’re under pressure from the signaller to complete the move.
- You see a set of points change, guiding you to the correct ‘road’.
- Trusting this information, you move off but pass a ground position signal which is displaying a red aspect.
- You SPAD because you had seen the red but dismissed it as applying to a different line.
- In this type of situation, if in doubt always contact the signaller.

Can you think of an example where this might apply to you?

So how can we get better at assessing information while we’re driving?
Firstly: Always assess every piece of information

- ‘TPWS reset and continue’ is a good example of drivers trying to avoid contradictory information, and we all know the dangers of that. You’ll probably remember this poster...

- If you pick up contradictory information, what should you do? You MUST work out the cause before proceeding.

- Contact the signaller for more information.

- Never assume that the information is false or the source of information faulty.

- Don’t rush to reach a conclusion – take time to assess all the possibilities.

Your notes

- Include any examples from your own experience of drivers ignoring or discounting important information:
Secondly: Try to talk aloud

You may have heard of ‘risk-triggered commentary’ (RTC) – it means talking to yourself as you drive.

These are real quotes from real drivers:

- “It keeps you focused on the information you’re picking up.”
- “Comment on what you’re seeing … AND what it could mean.”
- “Talking keeps you actively focused and mentally sharp.”
- “It can be used when things are quiet and there’s little going on.”
- Using it when there is lots to concentrate on can be tricky.”

What do you think of these quotes?

Give a short example commentary for a piece of track your drivers are likely to know:

“A number of examples of risk triggered commentary are included in this slide. Click on the slide to move through the examples.”

Also, enable trainer to click on slide to move to next example.
Thirdly: Know your black spots

- Make a mental note of your own black spots – places and times where you know it’s hard to concentrate. When might these be, eg day to night, fog to sunlight, boring line?
- This might be a difficult section where there are a lot of signals and potential hazards.
- Or it might be on a very plain, monotonous stretch of track where you find yourself feeling drowsy.
- Or it might be a particular shift or day of the week.

Practice, practice, practice

- When you next get the time, try re-running a recent journey in your mind.
- If there are any sections that you can’t remember watch out for them next time and try to make them more vivid in your memory.

Add anecdotes about any black spots you may have had as a driver:

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Link to the animation:

“And talking about re-running things in your memory – here’s that animation again – imagine yourself using that physical cue again…”

Aim to finish this section by ____ mins (approx 30 mins from start)
As soon as the animation finishes…

…click the next slide.
Stage 3: Anticipate

- The third and highest level of FOCUS is anticipation.

- Accurately predicting what will happen next enables us to make good decisions.

- Good route knowledge is key here.

- Knowing what features lie ahead helps you to make accurate predictions.

- Practising your routes will help you make informed decisions.

- Know your station stopping pattern.

- Why is knowing these things important?

- When driving in fog, snow, night, etc think of sounds and smells you associate with different features along your route, eg count bridges. Why are these important?
Assumptions

- But ‘accurately’ is the key word here.
- It is very easy to make the wrong assumption and then be surprised when things don’t go as expected.

Give ‘approach release’ example:

- You may expect an ‘approach release’ signal to clear to green because “that is how they work”.
- If it doesn’t clear you may SPAD.
- Ideally, you will approach the signal expecting it NOT to clear, because that is the worst-case scenario.

- Add your own examples of drivers making wrong assumptions.

This slide shows a short video of an approach release signal.
Highlight the change in aspect as the train approaches the signal.

So how can we learn to make accurate predictions?
Firstly: Question your beliefs

Ask questions like:

- Why has this happened?
- What else could this mean?
- What might happen next?
- What else might happen next?

Examples could be:

- Emergency brake application
- Passenger communication (pas com)
- Divided train.

What else?
Secondly: Think the worst

- Use the things you notice to anticipate ‘worst-case scenarios’.
- You don’t need to actually react to them – most of the time they won’t happen.
- But you can be ready in case they do happen.
- This defensive style of driving can give you sufficient time to react when things do go wrong.
- It avoids being caught by surprise, like moving your foot over the brake pedal in the car.

Insert your own anecdotes here:

_________________________

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Thirdly: Know changes to your route

These are real quotes:

- “You should know the permanent stuff, what about the temporary speed restrictions, emergency speed restrictions and new signals – have you prepared?”
- “Knowing your route is essential to good driving and a great aid to anticipation”.
- “Use verbal rehearsal (risk-triggered commentary) to help anticipate what will happen next”.
- “Actively combine your knowledge with new information, eg from the Weekly Operating Notices (WON)”.

“Rehearse your routes in your mind, particularly ones mentioned in the WON and unfamiliar routes and manoeuvres such as shunts”.

Add any examples about a driver avoiding an incident due to their GOOD route knowledge:

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Click on the next slide to run the animation again.

Aim to finish this section by ____ mins (approx 35 mins from start)
When the animation finishes, sum up the presentation

We’ve looked at three stages of FOCUS:

- Notice
- Think
- Anticipate.

We’ve talked through lots of ways of improving your FOCUS and avoiding going out of FOCUS.

You’ve shared some good ideas among yourselves as well.

I hope you can use your FOCUS cue when you’re driving.

Draw participants’ attention to the ‘Driver’s handbook’.

Your notes
Answers to possible questions:

Q: You said that FOCUS will make our driving more flowing – won’t it make it more hesitant, if we’re constantly worrying about dangers?
  ▪ You need to be alert to dangers in your mind, but not to react to them until you’re certain.
  ▪ That’s why we have the ‘think’ phase. It buys you time.

Like when you’re driving a car, you spot a potential danger ahead, like a child kicking a football along the pavement. You move your foot over the brake pedal, in case the child runs into the road. Most of the time the child stays safe, and the car behind you will never have known that your foot was near the brake pedal. You didn’t brake, your driving remained smooth.

Compare that to the driver who didn’t notice the child until the last minute, then quickly pressed the brake before continuing forward. The driver with the better focus has the smoother driving.

Q: Isn’t everything you’ve told us today just common sense – the sort of thing a good driver should be doing already? There wasn’t much new to think about.
  ▪ Glad you feel this way – you’re right that much of it is revision.
  ▪ The challenge is to make sure that you’re using it all the time.
  ▪ While a lot of what we’ve talked about is easy in theory, using it all the time, over a four- or five- or six-hour journey, is much more difficult.
  ▪ I hope you can use this as a recap and set yourself the challenge of being the most focused driver on the network!

Resources:
Some questions may be answered by referring drivers to alternative training/information sources, e.g.
  ▪ Risk-triggered commentary DVD
  ▪ The ‘red’ DVDs, particularly red 14, 15 and 16 which deal with risk issues
  ▪ The ‘21st Century Professional Driver’ video has guidance on lifestyle and self-management
  ▪ The RSSB website for materials to help tackle fatigue (look in the ‘Human Factors’ fact sheet section)
  ▪ If any participant is very persistent with a question you are unable to answer, please contact the RSSB Enquiry Desk on 020 7904 7518 and enquiries@rssb.co.uk, quoting ‘Focus & Human Factors’. 
Here’s a last thought to leave you with…

- Mistakes happen so quickly.
- We don’t want it to happen to us, but it could happen to any of us, any time.
- 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.
- We have to remember that the worst could happen.
- That way, we’ll use all our resources to make sure it doesn’t.
- The one phrase we hear time and time again from drivers who’ve made mistakes is “If only I’d done something differently”.

The skills and tips we’ve shared today will help you.

- The material has already helped one person involved in this project avoid a car accident.
- Find the tips that work best for you, then USE THEM!
- And remember… FOCUS!

Thank you for coming and for joining in.
Trainer’s Feedback Sheet

How did it go?

Thank you for reading this presentation. We’d like to know what you think of the presentation, the training you received, and the other briefing materials in this pack, so that we can improve future briefings. We’d be grateful if you would take the time to give us your comments:

1. Did you attend a FOCUS ‘train the trainer’ session?
   - Yes / No
   - If Yes, please rate the training out of 5, where; 5 = excellent and 1 = poor
     __/ 5

2. As a whole, would you describe the briefing materials as (please tick):
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Average
   - Poor
   - Didn’t use
   - Don’t know

3. If you didn’t use the materials, please tell us why:

4. If you did use some of the materials, please tell us what you thought of each part and give each a mark out of 5, where; 5 = excellent, 1 = poor and 0 = didn’t use
   - The teaser poster __/ 5
   - The PowerPoint presentation and Trainer’s notes __/ 5
   - The Driver’s handbook __/ 5
   - The follow-up poster __/ 5

5. What did you like most about the materials?

6. What did you like least about the materials?

7. How did your drivers react to the materials?

8. Would you like further briefing packs like this one, and if so, on what topics?

Please add any other comments on a separate sheet, or contact us on 020 7904 7518 and enquiries@rssb.co.uk, quoting ‘Focus & Human Factors’.

Thank you for giving us your views. Please send the completed form to:

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NW1 2DX