



Note No. A018/15

Protocol Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office presents its compliments to all diplomatic missions and international organisations and has the honour to refer to diplomatic driving permits and the requirement to obtain valid motor insurance.

Protocol Directorate wishes to remind missions that diplomatic agents, administrative & technical staff members, consular officers and consular employees, who wish to drive in the UK but are unable to use their own national licence or exchange it for a UK licence, need to apply to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for a courtesy diplomatic driving permit. For further guidance on driving in the UK, who must exchange their national licence for a UK licence and the process involved, may be obtained from the following website: <http://www.gov.uk/driving-nongb-licence>. Guidance on how to apply for a diplomatic driving permit is available on the Protocol website.

Service staff (including drivers who have been accredited as such) are not eligible to apply for a diplomatic driving permit but must, within one year of arrival in the UK, apply for a UK driving licence.

Members of international organisations who enjoy privileges and immunity may apply for a diplomatic driving permit if they wish. However, they should also obtain a UK driving license as soon as possible.

Following a number of recent instances whereby diplomats have been found by the police to be driving without insurance, members of diplomatic missions and international organisations are reminded they must be covered by a valid motor insurance policy when driving in the UK. Failure to have motor insurance cover is considered a serious offence and details are included in the annual Written Ministerial Statement on offences allegedly committed by members of foreign missions and international organisations in the UK.

Protocol Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office avails itself of this opportunity to express to all diplomatic missions and international organisations the assurances of its highest consideration.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
LONDON SW1A 2AH
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