

Safety Alert

Managing incidents involving alternative fuelled vehicles

28 February 2020

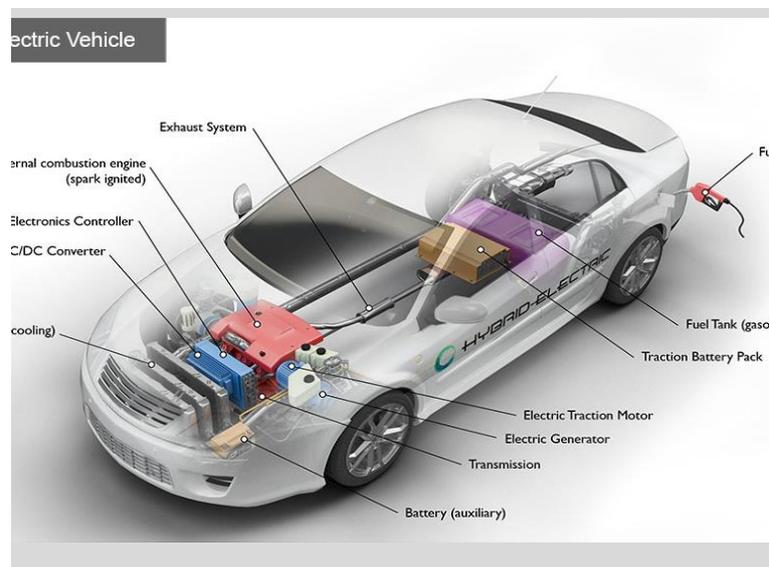
Background information

As the number of electric & hybrid powered vehicles increases on the strategic road network, there is an increased likelihood that supply chain partners working on our network, will attend incidents involving them (Road Traffic Collisions or breakdowns).

These vehicles have a variety of names, they can be known as Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV), Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEV) or Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV) but all will have some form of stored electrical energy.

We have been reviewing HSE guidance on how to deal with Electric and Hybrid Vehicles in the event of a vehicle breakdown or road traffic collision and have taken the decision that Traffic Officers **will no longer** attempt to recover the vehicle or move it off the carriageway. Instead, they are instructed to make the scene safe using existing controls as normal and wait for specialist vehicle recovery to isolate and move the vehicle.

Highways England will continue to work with colleagues in the vehicle recovery sector to establish safe methods of working that mitigates the risks associated with Electric and Hybrid Vehicles. When completed, this will allow us to maintain our standards for scene clearance and all get home, safe and well.



Recommendations:

- Be aware that should the battery be damaged there is a risk that harmful liquids and /or explosive gasses may be released. There is also the potential that high voltage electricity may be present in cabling and components.
- If you are in any doubt about the type of vehicle, make the scene safe and wait for the recovery specialist.
- Link to HSE Guidance:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/mvr/topics/electric-hybrid.htm>