Shunter

Shunter Course: Rigid vehicles

The Health and Safety at Work Act requires employers to provide adequate training, instruction, and supervision for employees.

This is especially required where a substantial risk has been identified. This would be the case in the role as a Shunter driver within a site. Obviously a fully qualified LGV driver would have the necessary skills to be able to perform his/her role but it could be argued that they could be lacking in the knowledge covering their responsibilities. As there is no legal requirement for drivers of LGVs driven on company premises to have a full driving licence this course would also satisfy the legal requirements under the HSAWA 74 and PUWER 98.

Shunter course content:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment
- Regulations 1998
- Yard safety assessment
- Vehicle and Trailer checks
- Coupling and uncoupling to DSA test standards
- Safe parking of trailers
- Workplace Transport Safety to HSE standards
- Manoeuvring laden and unladen trailers
- Theory test verbal
- Reversing assessment

Our instructors have a wealth of experience in this area, they have all trained novice operators to the DVSA test standard, and they have all shunted vehicles around yards in the working environment. This helps us bring realism to the training environment.

Every year people are killed or seriously injured, and property is damaged as a result of vehicle runaway or trailer rollaway situations. These are often the result of drivers not following safe procedures and those,

In control of sites not having suitable monitoring arrangements in place to ensure safe procedures are followed. Research conducted by the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL) suggests many of these events go unreported.

Under health and safety legislation employers have a responsibility to provide and maintain safe systems of work to ensure the health and safety of both those at work and those who may be affected by their activities such as members of the public. There should also be effective arrangements in place to ensure these systems are being followed. Drivers, including the self-employed, have a responsibility for both their own health and safety and that of other people who could be affected by their actions.

This document is intended to be a guide to assist employers, those who control sites where coupling and uncoupling is undertaken by users of large goods vehicles, managers, self-employed drivers and driver training bodies. It has been developed by industry as a good practice guide with the aim of reducing the likelihood of a runaway or rollaway incident.

. In addition to these procedures, the guide also contains supplementary safety guidance and advice that should be observed and a section concerning good parking practice.

Introduction

Every year, about 50 people are killed and more than 5000 people are injured in accidents involving workplace transport (www.hse.gov.uk/statistics). The most common causes are people falling from or being struck by a vehicle, objects falling from a vehicle, or vehicles overturning.

This guide provides comprehensive advice for employers on what they need to do to comply with the law and reduce risk. It will also be useful for managers, supervisors, employees and their safety representatives, self-employed people, contractors, vehicle operators and other organisations concerned with workplace transport safety.

For a brief introduction to workplace transport safety, look at HSE's leaflet *Workplace transport safety: A brief guide*.[1] For basic, general information for small businesses on managing health and safety, look at HSE's 'Health and safety made simple: The basics for your business' (www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety).

Workplace transport' means any vehicle or piece of mobile equipment used in any work setting. It covers a very wide range of vehicles, from cars, vans, lorries and lift trucks, to less common vehicles and plant such as straddle carriers and rubber-tyred gantries.

Vehicles moving on public roads are not usually classed as 'workplace transport', because road traffic laws cover any associated risks in more detail than general health and safety law. However, public roads are often used as temporary workplaces, for example during roadside deliveries, road works or breakdown assistance, so health and safety law applies.

Safe site – design

Every workplace must be safe for the people and vehicles using it. A well-designed workplace that ensures vehicles and pedestrians are segregated will make transport accidents less likely. If you don't have the competence in-house when considering site design, ask for professional advice.

Traffic routes

In the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, a ‘traffic route’ is defined as ‘a route for pedestrian traffic, vehicles or both’. In the broader context of the Regulations, it also includes any stairs, staircase, fixed ladder, doorway, gateway, loading bay or ramp.

When planning workplace traffic routes, take account of the following requirements from the Regulations:

- ✯ They must be suitable for the people and vehicles using them and organised so that they can both move around safely.
- ✯ Where vehicles and pedestrians share a traffic route, there must be enough separation between them (segregation).
- ✯ Pedestrians or vehicles must be able to use a traffic route without causing danger to the health or safety of people working near it.
- ✯ Vehicle routes must be far enough away from doors or gates that pedestrians use, or from pedestrian routes that lead on to them, so the safety of pedestrians is not threatened.
- ✯ Every traffic route must have a well-drained surface that is suitable for its purpose and must not be so uneven, potholed, sloped or slippery that it might expose anyone to a risk to their health or safety.
- ✯ They must, so far as is reasonably practicable, be kept free from obstructions and anything that may cause anyone to slip, trip or fall.
- ✯ They must have appropriate markings and signs where necessary for health or safety reasons.

  The Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) text accompanying the Regulations states there should be enough traffic routes with enough width and headroom to allow vehicles to circulate freely without having to leave the route. Routes should:

- ✯ avoid steep slopes (or ensure they are properly signposted if they are unavoidable);
- ✯ avoid sharp or blind bends (or use measures such as mirrors to improve vision if they are unavoidable);
- ✯ be made of a suitable material, firm and even, and able to safely bear the loads that will pass over them;
- ✯ be maintained to provide good grip for vehicles or people, eg gritted or sanded if slippery, with no obstructions, holes or loose materials;
- ✯ give prominent warning to limited headroom, both in advance and at the obstruction itself;

- ✯ avoid passing close to:
  ✯ any edge, or anything that is likely to collapse or be left in a dangerous state if hit (such as cast-iron columns or storage racking), unless it fenced or adequately protected;

✯ potentially dangerous items unless they are well protected (eg fuel chemical tanks or pipes).

The law that requires traffic routes to be wide enough for pedestrians and vehicles to circulate freely only applies to routes laid out since 1 January 1993. On traffic routes that existed before that date, where it is not practical to widen the route, consider vehicle passing places, traffic management systems (such as one- way systems), or restrictions on parking.

Look at HSE's ACOP and guidance *Workplace health, safety and welfare*[4] for more information. For traffic routes in construction sites, look at regulation 36 of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 – see HSE's ACOP *Managing health and safety in construction*[5] and HSE's publication *The safe use of vehicles on construction sites*.[6]

One-way systems

One-way systems are designed to limit reversing and prevent conflicting movements caused by 'two-way' traffic flow. They should work clockwise around a site, as this is the direction most drivers will expect, unless there are reasons why this would not be a safer option. They need to be clearly marked out using road markings and signs so that drivers can follow them easily. The advantages of one- way systems are:

- ✯ they help pedestrians know which direction vehicles are likely to be coming from;
- ✯ routes can be arranged to allow for good visibility around corners and at crossing points;
- ✯ they are easy to enforce;
- ✯ they are particularly useful where site access roads are narrow and visibility is poor.
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Banksmen (signallers)

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- Banksmen should only be used when there is no other way to control reversing risks. Because they often have to stand relatively close to a vehicle when it is reversing, it is very important that they are properly trained and competent. In some industries, banksmen are only used in exceptional circumstances because of the size of vehicles involved.
- Banksmen should use the standard hand signals used across Europe. These signals may not be enough to cover every situation and the law also allows for specific alternatives to be used if they are more appropriate, including BS 6736: 1986 *Code of practice for hand signalling for use in agricultural operations*.[17] If these signals are still not enough, further signals can be used based on existing signalling practice. Whatever signals are used, it is important that both banksman and driver should agree and understand them before any manoeuvres start.
- They need to be visible to drivers at all times. Precautions for visibility are especially important in low-light conditions and should include, where appropriate:
- ✯ high-visibility equipment, such as bats, batons or flags;
  ✯ a high-visibility vest that will distinguish them from other site workers; ✯ vehicle- or site-fixed visibility aids (such as mirrors, cameras etc).
- They need to stand in a safe position where they can guide the reversing vehicle and be visible to the driver at all times. If a driver loses sight of a banksman they should stop immediately. In some circumstances, portable radios or similar communication systems can be helpful, although the banksman should still be visible to the driver at all times.

Loading and unloading areas

When deliveries and collections are made, loading and unloading areas should:

- ✯ be in designated places, clear of passing traffic, pedestrians and other people who are not involved in loading or unloading;

- ✯ be clear of overhead power cables or pipework so there is no chance of fouling them, or of electricity jumping to ‘earth’ (arcing) through machinery, the load or people;

- ✯ be on firm, level ground, free from potholes and debris;

- ✯ have a safe area for drivers to wait that allows them to rest between driving shifts, especially if they may be waiting for several hours, with easy and safe access to toilet, washing and refreshment facilities and shelter in case of bad weather.

  Although everyone involved in loading a vehicle is responsible for the vehicle being loaded safely, drivers need to make sure their vehicle has been properly loaded, because they drive on public roads. Where drivers need to observe the loading, this should be from a clearly marked, safe position, for example away from moving vehicles, or places where loads could fall.

Preventing vehicles from overturning

Nearly a fifth of all workplace transport deaths are caused by vehicles overturning. Lift trucks, tractors, compact dumpers, tipper lorries, forestry and all- terrain vehicles, multi-deck vehicles and cranes are all more likely to overturn. Ways of making overturns less likely are to:

- ✯ plan out suitable routes, avoiding slopes that are too steep, and uneven or slippery surfaces, kerbs or sharp turns;
- ✯ maintain traffic routes;
- ✯ erect barriers, walls, banks and signs to help drivers avoid unsuitable terrain or hazards such as pits or trenches;
- ✯ consider speed restrictions and enforce them where appropriate;

- ✯ load evenly according to the loading capacity of the vehicle;
- ✯ use vehicles suitable for the task;
- ✯ transport loads on lift trucks with loads carried as close to the ground as practicable;
- ✯ make sure vehicles are well maintained (also see ‘Maintenance and repair’,
- ✯ only allow properly trained operators to drive vehicles;
- ✯ keep surfaces well-repaired, free of obstructions (such as cables) and clear of debris.

1. *Driving on slopes*

To help avoid overturns when driving on a slope, drivers should do the following:

- ✯ Check the manufacturer’s instructions for stability limits and other recommendations for use.
- ✯ If driving across a slope cannot be avoided, try to drive forwards up the slope.
- ✯ Never turn across a slope while already on it.
- ✯ If driving down a slope cannot be avoided, drive down the shallowest part of the slope. It is usually better to drive forward down the slope rather than diagonally, to maintain the stability of the vehicle.
- ✯ Never drive a lift truck diagonally down a slope.
- ✯ Always drive loaded lift trucks up or down slopes with the forks facing uphill. Without a load, ensure the forks face downhill when driving up or down slopes;
- ✯ Keep speed to a minimum on slopes.
- ✯ Many vehicles are more stable going uphill than downhill. Being safe to drive up a slope does not mean it will be safe to drive down it.