

Site inspection: Generic On Site Risk assessment Things To Look Out For

Step 1 – Identify the hazards

First you need to look at work activities that involve vehicles (including visiting vehicles) over a reasonable period. This could be over the course of a day, a week or a month. You need to build up a clear picture of vehicle and pedestrian traffic in the workplace, and to make sure you miss nothing important.

List all the activities you know will happen in your workplace, such as deliveries, loading or collecting waste. You can do this by watching the workplace and observing:

- where vehicles are;
- what drivers are doing;
- how they are doing it; and
- why they are doing it.

You might like to use our site inspection help you spot workplace transport hazards. A plan of the site can help you see where vehicles are operating, and where any dangers might be.

In particular, look for areas where people work around moving vehicles, and where people work on vehicles themselves. You should remember to include every task you can think of, including those:

- that happen at quiet times;
- that don't happen very often (like collecting waste); or
- that take place in a different workplace, for example, an employee delivering to a customer's site).

Asking security or gate staff who enters a site, or asking a stores department for a list of which firms deliver and when, can help you build up a complete picture of transport activity in your workplace.

List all the vehicles that visit your site, and make a note of what they do. Think about when and where these things happen, and what else is happening in that area at the same time. This will make it easier to recognise who might be harmed, in of the risk assessment.

To identify the hazards, look at each of the work activities associated with transport and ask: 'What are the possible dangers, and what is causing them?'

There are four main kinds of accidents that involve workplace transport:

- people being struck by or run over by a vehicle;
- people being struck by something falling from a vehicle;
- people falling from vehicles;
- vehicles overturning.

The questions you ask yourself should concentrate on these dangers, and should cover all the aspects of vehicle use in your workplace. Concentrate on things that are

likely to cause serious damage, or hurt several people, because these are the more significant hazards. The site inspection will give you an idea of the sort of questions to ask. It is based on tasks that often happen around vehicles, and measures to control risks you should be thinking about.

When you are looking for transport hazards, look at:

- features of your workplace (such as how routes are laid out and whether they are in good condition);
- the vehicles themselves; and
- the actions of the drivers and others who are near to vehicles.

Think 'site', 'vehicle', 'driver'.

Also think how things could change (for example, at different times of the year or in bad weather). Examples could include:

- drivers being dazzled by strong sunlight at times of the year when the sun is low in the sky;
- bad visibility in a loading area when deliveries are made at night;
- the effects of strong gusts of wind on people working high up on the outside of vehicles; or
- heavy rain, mist, snow, ice or frost.

Include any hazards that already have precautions in place to prevent the hazard from harming anyone. For example, an open-top vehicle may be fitted with a system to prevent it from rolling over (or to protect the driver if it does roll over). However, you should still:

- look to see if there is a possibility that the vehicle will overbalance;
- make a note of any safety measures; and
- consider whether any existing precautions are good enough.

Ask drivers, supervisors and any other employees at the site (including contractors and, possibly, visiting drivers) for their views on any problems and what they think could be done to make the work safer.

You may find it helpful to take photographs. You can keep these as part of a recorded risk assessment and to show what hazards and preventive measures have been identified.

Step 2 – Decide who might be harmed and how

Hazards involving workplace transport involve drivers – both those employed at one site and drivers visiting sites owned by other companies. Think all other employees, contractors, subcontractors, customers, part-time employees, cleaners, maintenance staff, visitors and members of the public. Which of these types of people are likely to be near to vehicles, and why?

Step 3 – Evaluate the risks

The risk posed by each hazard is the chance that somebody will be harmed (high or low), and how seriously they might be harmed (seriously or not). High risks are ones where someone is very likely to be harmed or where the harm is likely to be serious (or both).

Once you have identified the hazards and who is in danger, you should think about how likely it is that an accident will happen and, if it does, how severe the injury is likely to be. Transport accidents are usually serious, or at least have the potential to be serious.

Higher risks include both:

- accidents that are very likely to happen, regardless of outcome; and
- and accidents that, however unlikely, could cause serious harm.

Once you have decided how much risk a hazard is causing, you can think about controlling the risks. Ask yourself:

- Have we done anything to reduce this risk?
- Are the measures enough?

If you have not met any general legal duties, or specific legal requirements relating to the hazard, you will need to take more precautions.

If you have already taken measures to reduce particular risks, you will still need to ask whether the other risks are acceptably low. For example, you might decide that as well as setting speed limits on vehicle routes, you need to install road humps or other measures to make sure that vehicles do not drive too fast.

Eliminate or reduce the risks

If you decide that something more needs to be done, you should first try to remove the problem altogether (for example, by restricting vehicle movements to certain parts of the workplace).

If you cannot remove the problem, try to reduce the risks.

Ways to reduce risk

- Instruct and train employees to take care, to use work equipment safely, and to use personal protective equipment. However, do not rely on this to keep them safe if there is more you can do.
- Where possible, change the layout of the workplace or use vehicles with appropriate safety features (for example, have separate pathways for pedestrians, use road humps, or use vehicles with speed limiters). You should also set up safe systems of working (for example, enforce speed limits).

- Prioritise the improvement measures you have identified based on the level of risk you have decided each hazard poses, and set a realistic date for each action.

Step 4 – Record your findings

If your organisation employs five or more people (including managers), by law you must record the significant findings of your assessment.

This means recording the more significant hazards (usually in writing) and your most important conclusions (for example, 'Risk of dislodged load because of low branches – cut back regularly and put up a warning sign').

You will find this a useful part of your risk assessment because it helps you remember what you have found and what you have decided to do.

The risk assessment form is a clear way of recording your findings, and it reflects the five-step approach we recommend. There is also an example of how a risk assessment could look, to help you when you do your own.

You must also tell your employees, including any safety representatives, about your findings. You can do this more easily with a written record.

Step 5 – Review the risk assessment

You should review the risk assessment form regularly, to check that it is still relevant. Each risk assessment should include a date for when a review is due, which should take account of the type of work and the speed of changes, which are likely to be different for every workplace.

New hazards may emerge when you:

- introduce new vehicles;
- change the traffic routes; or
- change the nature of the work.

Assess risks before you make any significant changes. This will help keep risks as low as possible from the moment the changes are introduced. You must consult employees either directly or through elected safety representatives if the changes could substantially affect their health and safety. Keep the risk assessment up-to-date with working practices and equipment.

Workplace transport checklist The following checklist is a guide to what you should consider when assessing the risk from vehicles in the workplace. It may not be comprehensive for all work situations. Look at 'Find out more' if you need more information. Managing and supervising workplace transport safety Check, in consultation with your employees, that your level of management control/supervision is adequate

- Are your supervisors, drivers and others, including contractors and visiting drivers, aware of the site rules and their responsibilities to help maintain a safe workplace and environment?
- Has a risk assessment been carried out for all workplace transport hazards?
- Is the level of supervision sufficient to ensure that safe standards are maintained?
- Are penalties applied when employees, contractors etc fail to maintain these standards?
- Do you take adequate steps to detect and correct any unsafe behaviour of drivers of both on-site and visiting vehicles, as well as pedestrians?
- Do you make sure the underlying reasons for unsafe behaviour are investigated?
- Is there good co-operation and liaison on health and safety matters between your employees and those who collect or deliver goods? Check what your drivers and other employees actually do when doing their work
- Do drivers drive with care, eg use the correct routes, drive within the speed limit and follow any other site rules?
- Do you make sure your drivers and other employees have enough time to complete their work without rushing or working excessive hours?
- Are your employees using safe work practices, eg when (un)coupling, (un)loading, securing loads, or carrying out maintenance?
- Do managers and supervisors set a good example, eg by obeying vehicle/ pedestrian segregation instructions, and by wearing high-visibility clothing where needed?
- Do drivers and other employees wear any personal protective equipment provided and use any safety equipment provided? Site layout and internal traffic routes Check that the layout of routes is appropriate
- Are vehicles and pedestrians kept safely apart?
- Where necessary, are there suitable pedestrian crossing places on vehicle routes?
- Is there a safe pedestrian route that allows visiting drivers to report for instructions when entering the site?
- Is there a properly designed and signed one-way system used on vehicle routes within the workplace?

- Are there adequate numbers of suitable and safe parking places for all vehicles and are they used?
- Is the level of lighting in each area sufficient for the pedestrian and vehicle activity? Check that vehicle traffic routes are suitable for the type and quantity of vehicles which use them
- Are they wide enough?
- Do they have firm and even surfaces?
- Are they free from obstructions and other hazards?
- Are they well maintained?
- Do they avoid sharp or blind bends? Check that suitable safety features are provided where appropriate
- Are roadways marked where necessary, eg to indicate the right of way at road junctions?
- Are road signs, as used in the Highway Code, installed where necessary?
- Are features such as fixed mirrors (to provide greater vision at blind bends), road humps (to reduce vehicle speeds), or barriers (to keep vehicles and pedestrians apart) provided where necessary?

Vehicle movements Check that the need for reversing is kept to a minimum and, where reversing is necessary, that it is carried out safely and in safe areas

- Have drive-through, one-way systems been used wherever possible to reduce the need for reversing?
- Where reversing areas are needed, are they suitably marked or signposted to be clear to both drivers and pedestrians?
- Are non-essential people excluded from areas where vehicles reverse?
- If there is no alternative and you have to use a banksman to direct reversing vehicles, are they adequately trained and visible? Coupling/uncoupling Check that coupling and uncoupling of vehicles are carried out safely
- Are the tractor and trailer parking brakes always applied before the hoses are disconnected?
- Do drivers check the ground will support the trailer and landing legs before uncoupling?
- Are landing legs always fully extended, properly padded and locked in place as necessary?
- Is the platform area behind the tractor unit kept clear, as clean as possible and well lit to help prevent falls? Loading/unloading activities Check that there are safe systems for loading and unloading operations

- Are loading/unloading operations carried out in an area away from passing traffic, pedestrians and others not involved in the loading/unloading operation?
- Are the load(s), the delivery vehicle(s) and the handling vehicle(s) compatible with each other?
- Are loading/unloading activities carried out on ground that is flat, firm and free from potholes?
- Are the vehicles braked and/or stabilised, as appropriate, to prevent unsafe movements during loading/unloading operations?
- Are systems in place to prevent vehicles driving away while they are still being (un)loaded?
- Are drivers and others kept in a safe place away from the vehicle during (un)loading?
- If drivers need to observe loading, is there a clearly marked, safe area for them to do this?
- Has the need for people to go onto the load area of the vehicle been eliminated where possible and, if not, is safe access provided and used?
- Is appropriate lifting equipment available for (un)loading vehicles?
- Is loading/unloading carried out so that, as far as possible, the load is spread evenly to avoid the vehicle or trailer becoming unstable?
- Are checks made to ensure loads are adequately secured and arranged so that they cannot move about?
- Are checks made to make sure vehicles are not loaded beyond their capacity before they leave the site? Tipping Check that tipping operations are carried out safely
- Do visiting drivers report to the site manager for any relevant instructions before tipping?
- Are non-essential staff excluded from tipping areas?
- Does tipping take place on ground that is level and stable, where there are no overhead hazards such as power lines, pipework etc?
- Where sites are not level and stable, are the tipping faces safe for vehicles involved in tipping operations, eg compacted with no side slopes?
- Are suitably sized wheel stops provided for reversing tipping vehicles?
- Are tailgates secured open before tipping or removed completely when necessary?
- Do drivers check their loads are evenly distributed across the vehicle before tipping?
- Do drivers know what to do if loads stick while tipping?

■ Do drivers always make sure the body is completely empty, and drive no more than a few metres forward to ensure the load is clear?

■ Is there a system of maintenance in place for the tipper and the tipping mechanism?

Work at height on vehicles Check that suitable and effective measures are in place to prevent falls from vehicles

■ Do you avoid work at height where it is reasonably practicable to do so, eg by doing work from the ground?

■ Where work at height cannot be avoided, do you prevent falls using an existing safe place of work or the right type of equipment, eg a suitable platform or a gantry with guard rails?

■ Where the risk of a fall cannot be eliminated, do you minimise the distance and consequences of a fall, eg using a personal fall-protection system?

■ Are surfaces slip-resistant where people need to walk on vehicles? Sheeting/unsheeting
Check that sheeting and unsheeting operations are carried out safely

■ Can the sheeting operation be carried out from the ground?

■ Are sheeting/unsheeting operations carried out in safe parts of the workplace, away from passing traffic and pedestrians and sheltered from strong winds and bad weather?

■ Are the vehicles parked on level ground with their parking brakes on and the ignition key removed?

■ Do you use automatic or mechanical sheeting systems to avoid the need for manual sheeting?

■ Where manual sheeting is unavoidable, is there a system in place which avoids the need for a person to climb on the vehicle or load, eg by sheeting from the ground or providing a platform from which loads can be sheeted? Vehicle selection and suitability
Check that vehicles are safe and suitable for the work for which they are being used

■ Have suitable vehicles and attachments been selected for the tasks which are actually carried out?

■ Is there a safe means of access to and from the cabs and other parts that need to be reached?

■ Is a suitable working platform and edge protection provided where necessary?

■ Do they have suitable external mirrors and additional aids (eg CCTV) where necessary to provide the greatest visibility when manoeuvring?

■ Do they have horns, lights, reflectors, reversing lights and other safety features as necessary?

- Do they have effective service and parking brakes?
- Do they have seats and seat restraints where necessary that are safe and comfortable for users?
- Are there guards to prevent access to dangerous parts of the vehicles, eg power take-offs, chain drives, exposed exhaust pipes?
- Are drivers protected against bad weather conditions, or an unpleasant working environment, eg the cold, dirt, dust, fumes and excessive noise and vibration?
- Is suitable driver protection against injury provided where necessary if there is an overturn?
- Is suitable driver protection provided where necessary to prevent them being hit by falling objects?
- Are operators involved with or consulted on vehicle selection? Vehicle maintenance Check that vehicles are maintained properly
- Is there a regular preventative maintenance programme for every vehicle, carried out at set times or mileage (eg in accordance with manufacturer's instructions)?
- Is there a system for reporting faults on the vehicle and associated equipment and carrying out remedial work?
- Where vehicle attachments lift people or objects, are thorough examinations carried out by a competent person?
- Do drivers carry out basic safety checks before using the vehicle? Driver competence Check that your selection and training procedures ensure your drivers and other employees are capable of performing their work activities safely and responsibly
- Do drivers have the necessary licences or certificates for the vehicles they are authorised to drive?
- Do you check the previous experience of your drivers, making sure references to training schemes and other qualifications are supported by certificates?
- Do you assess them to ensure they are competent?
- Do you provide site-specific training on how to perform the job, and information about particular hazards, speed limits, the appropriate parking and loading areas etc?
- Do you have a planned programme of reassessment and refresher training for drivers and others to ensure their continued competence?