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| Document Type | SAFETY NOTICE |
| Category: | Health & Safety |
| Subject: | Timber Haulage on Forest Roads |
| Issued By: | Safety Team and Coillte Training |
| Issued To: | CONTRACTORS |
| Date: | 15/02/2023 |
| Reference No: | OHSMS SN18 |

Introduction

To all Timber Hauliers,

There have been a considerable number of accidents involving timber haulage lorries on the Coillte estate and on public roads over the last number of years. Six lorries loaded with timber overturned and shed their loads on forest roads in the last 5 years. These accidents resulted in injuries to drivers, damage to lorries and trailers, damage to roads, significant recovery costs for Hauliers and road repair costs to Coillte.

During that 5-year period four lorries veered off forest roads but didn't overturn or shed their load. Nobody was injured as a result of these accidents and minimum or low levels of damage was caused to the lorries. However, considerable time was lost and recovery and repairs were required.

Five timber haulage lorries overturned on public roads over the last 5 years causing injuries to drivers, damage to lorries and significant recovery costs for Hauliers.

Coillte issued a [Timber Haulage Safety Alert](#) in 2019.

Findings

Follow up investigations of the accidents on forest roads identified the following as possible contributing factors in causing these accidents:

- Travelling too close to the edge of the forest road or taking bends and corners too tightly
- Distractions such as mobile phones or other electronic devices, remember forest roads are narrow and you could easily veer off with little distraction
- Travelling too fast on forest roads. The maximum speed limit on Forest roads is 25kph, remember these are unbound gravel roads

Follow Up

A 15 minute e-learning course covering the safe driving of timber haulage lorries on forest roads which includes a short assessment has been developed by Coillte. An email will be issued with instructions on how to access this mandatory e-learning module through MyLearningHUB (formally TRMS) during February.

Haulage General Site Safety Rules

A copy of Coillte's general haulage site safety rules is included below. These haulage site safety rules apply to all Coillte sites. Please make yourself aware of these rules.

| Haulage General Site Safety Rules | |
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| 1. | Only authorised vehicles allowed on site at all times. |
| 2. | Contractor must have an up-to-date and adequate Safety Statement or relevant extracts of it available in the vehicle. |
| 3. | When working alone ensure that effective lone working procedures are in place. |
| 4. | All vehicles & equipment must be appropriate to the site and have an appropriate & valid certification (CVRT & GA1). |
| 5. | Audible reversing alarm must be fitted and fully functional on all lorries. |
| 6. | Each loading & haulage unit must have an adequate pollution control kit. |
| 7. | Drivers operating cranes must be competent in crane operation and be in possession of a valid crane operating certificate to NPTC (City and Guilds 0020-28). |
| 8. | An adequate and up-to-date First Aid Kit must be available in the vehicle. |
| 9. | Driver must complete Coillte stipulated training to approved standards and be in the possession of valid certificates; including manual handling and at a minimum, in Lantra basic first aid with forestry extension. |
| 10. | Driver must adhere to "Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice" and Coillte's "Code of Practice for Timber Removals". |
| 11. | All accidents, incidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences must be reported to the Forest Works Manager and to Trimble Forestry immediately. |
| 12. | An up-to-date emergency plan with relevant telephone numbers must be available to the driver in the vehicle. |
| 13. | While working on site, barriers must remain unlocked (secured either open or closed depending on local site arrangements) and forest roadways must be kept clear, other than the lorry which is loading timber, to facilitate emergency vehicles or egress in the event of an accident. |
| 14. | Turning areas must remain free from parked vehicles during loading operations to allow lorries drive in and turn which will minimise reversing. |
| 15. | Driver must maintain good all round visibility at all times and check for people when reversing and take due care when entering & exiting the forest. |
| 16. | Minimise vehicle reversing where possible. |
| 17. | Driver must not exceed the maximum speed limit of 25kph on forest roads. Lower speeds should apply where appropriate; e.g. changing weather conditions & public usage. |
| 18. | Drivers to adhere to all signage on site. On a non-active harvesting site, where harvesting signage has been removed, drivers must erect their own signs to prevent access during operations. |
| 19. | Driver must wear adequate Personal Protective Equipment when exiting cab of truck (Helmet, High Visibility Clothing, Steel Toe-Cap Boots). |
| 20. | Driver must not enter the risk zone of harvesting machines that are operating on site. |
| 21. | Stop work immediately if a machine or person enters your risk zone (20 metres approximately), while loading, unloading and strapping of load. |
| 22. | Care to be taken when operating near overhead powerlines (see guidelines IFSG 804). Ensure that the crane is fully lowered to the transport position while moving, to avoid the risk of contact with overhead cables. Goalposts and warning signs must be in place. Hauliers must notify Forestry Work Manager if Goalposts and warning signs are not in place. |
| 23. | Transverse loading is not permitted unless suitable and appropriate load restraint (in compliance with HSA load securing guidance) is in place. |
| 24. | Do not load above the level of the headboard and stanchions. |
| 25. | Ensure timber stacks are left stable and in a safe condition after loading. |
| 26. | Driver must ensure that the load is secure before leaving the site and that there are no protruding branches or unstable logs. |
| 27. | All loads should be strapped and re-tensioned as necessary, to comply with the recommended number of straps per bay is listed in the "Round Timber Transport Guidelines for Hauliers and Drivers"; Forest Industry Transport Group, July 2017. |
| 28. | Where the boom can be bedded into the top of the load it can be strapped down along with the load. If this is not possible the boom must be strapped down separately. |
| 29. | When off-loading timber, stacks are to be constructed in a stable condition at appropriate safe stack height. |
| <p>These general site safety rules apply to all Haulage sites and should be read in conjunction with site specific safety rules as set out in the activity pack.</p> <p>Copies of referenced guidelines must be available on site and staff instructed on their contents.</p> | |

SR07 - Version 3.1; February 2023

Version 3 of the [Code of Practice for Timber Removals](#) was issued in 2022.