



Ireland



COILLTE DRIVERS' HANDBOOK



COILLTE

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Drivers' Handbook

The Drivers' Handbook has been designed to ensure that all drivers are aware of their statutory duties in respect of safe driving for work practices and to make drivers engaged in the forestry industry aware of the main risks they may face and the policies and procedures that they must follow to minimise the risk associated with their driving tasks.

Please read this handbook carefully, sign it on page 44 and keep the handbook accessible for your reference.

The forestry haulage industry is committed to safe operation in all of its activities, preventing accidents and causing no damage to health, property or the environment. The primary aim of this handbook is to facilitate employees to perform safely and effectively ensuring the industry consistently meets its high quality service obligations.

Safety is everyone's responsibility and by working together as a team the industry can ensure a safer place of work which is our common goal. We must constantly strive to improve our performance and by working together we can prevent accidents and make the work place safer for everyone.



Welcome

Contents

Introduction	3	Digital cards and analogue tachograph charts	22
Health, safety and welfare	4	Working time rules	22
Employer responsibilities	4	Safe vehicle	24
Employee responsibilities	4	Before setting out – driver checks	25
Driver rules and legal requirements	6	Vehicle inspection sheet (sample HGV)	25
Induction	6	Fuel economy	27
Driver rules	6	Vehicle security	27
Driver key legal requirements	6	Forestry operations	28
Enforcement authorities	7	Forest timber collection	28
Vehicle operator responsibilities	7	Forest roads	29
Driver responsibilities	8	Road defect reporting	30
The driver	10	Loading timber in the forest	30
Dress code	11	Load securing	30
Drugs (including prescription drugs) and alcohol	12	Overhead lines	31
Smoking in the vehicle	12	Health and safety	32
Ergonomic issues	12	Night driving	32
Seat belts	12	Correct use of lights	32
Mobile phone policy	13	Dipped headlights	32
Road safety	14	Fog lights	33
Why is road safety important?	14	Working at height	33
Fatigue	14	Accessing and egressing a vehicle	33
Driving	15	Lone working, personal safety and vehicle security	34
Speed	15	Manual handling of loads	34
Motorway driving	16	Weight limits	35
Driving in the forest	16	Diesel	37
Coupling and uncoupling trailers	17	Procedure for vehicle breakdown	38
Reversing	18	Procedure for accident reporting in event of a road traffic accident (RTA)	39
Banksman	19	Key contacts' names and numbers	40
Pedestrians and cyclists	19	Penalty points	41
Weather conditions and seasonal hazards	19	Driver's confirmation	44
Tachographs and working time	20		
Tachograph information	20		
Summary of drivers' hours regulations	21		

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to ensure that each employee that drives a commercial vehicle is aware of what they need to know to drive and operate their vehicle legally and safely.

Statistics from the Health & Safety Authority show that the highest number of fatalities occur in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector, where 21 worker deaths were recorded in 2015. The highest rates of injury causing four or more days' absence from work in 2014 occurred in the transportation and storage sector. In addition many people are seriously injured in accidents involving vehicles. Common accidents include people being struck or run over by moving vehicles, people falling from vehicles or struck by objects falling from vehicles, persons not reporting defects with vehicles, horseplay, persons under the influence of intoxicants while operating vehicles and vehicles running away or overturning.

- The Drivers' Handbook is intended as an instruction manual for all drivers involved in the forestry sector. It plays an important role in maintaining and improving the quality and safety of the transport services within the forestry sector
- The issue of this handbook is controlled and its contents are reviewed when necessary
- It is the responsibility of the individual employers to ensure that all drivers employed by them receive the appropriate training and adhere to the procedures and instructions contained within this handbook
- Each individual is responsible for the quality of the service provided and, as a team, provide a safe and dependable service
- The Drivers' Handbook should be read in conjunction with your employer's Safety Statement and other available guides for drivers employed in the forestry haulage industry, eg *Managing Timber Transport - Good Practice Guide* and *Round Timber Transport - Guidelines for Hauliers and Drivers*
- Carry the handbook with you so that guidance is on hand whenever you need it
- Safety of drivers and of all road users is of the utmost importance. This guide will detail the attitude and behaviour required of drivers engaged in the forestry industry



This handbook outlines what is required of a driver in terms of the vehicle journey and driving behaviour. It provides guidance on safe driving. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with its contents and use the handbook as a reference into the future.

NOTE

This handbook is based on road traffic legislation in the Republic of Ireland. If operating in Northern Ireland please familiarise yourself with the relevant corresponding legislation.

Health, safety and welfare

The Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005 places specific duties on employers and all employees to take reasonable care to protect their own safety, health and welfare whilst at work and also to protect any other person who may be affected by their actions. This requirement applies to all work activities and all workplaces, including drivers whilst driving a company vehicle.

Employer responsibilities

The term 'employer' includes any person under whose control and direction an employee works. Everybody working in a company is an employee, but for the purposes of safety, health and welfare at work, all managers, supervisors and foremen are also employers. The main duties of employers are:

- to manage health and safety; to do this they must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all employees, ie take all necessary protective and preventative measures, identify hazards and assess risks to safety and health likely to result in harm
- prevent any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health or welfare of employees at risk
- provide training to employees on the commencement of employment, in the event of transfer, change of task or introduction of new systems of work or technology
- provide employees with training information and supervision in a form that is likely to be understood
- bring Safety Statements to employees' attention at least once a year, on commencement of employment, and whenever there is any change
- provide employees with safe equipment to carry out their tasks

Employee responsibilities

Employees have a number of duties imposed with regard to health and safety and that of others who may be affected by employee activities.

- Comply with safety and health legislation, both in the 2005 Act and elsewhere
- Co-operate fully with management on health and safety issues
- Report any damage to property or equipment
- Carry out duties in a safe and responsible manner
- Take responsibility for their own safety and that of any other person who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions at work
- Not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs or a combination of alcohol and drugs to the extent that he or she is likely to endanger his or her own safety, health or welfare at work or that of any other person
- Not engage in improper conduct or other behaviour such as violence, bullying and or horseplay, which could endanger another person at work or his or her safety, health and welfare
- Take account of training and instruction given by the employer
- Report ALL accidents and near misses

As a driver you must comply with the procedures and practices of your employer, and the relevant consignor and consignee associated with the load you are transporting. A driver must act in a professional and courteous manner whether face to face with the general public, clients or whilst driving on the roads.

Drivers are responsible for the cleanliness of the vehicles they are driving. The cab of the vehicle must be kept clean and tidy at all times. Please remove all rubbish. The vehicle must always be left in the same condition as you would expect to find it.

FACT

Between 1996 and 2012, 550 vans and 875 trucks were involved in fatal collisions. In addition over 3,000 drivers and passengers were seriously injured while driving for work.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following organisations for their participation in and contribution to the development of this handbook:

- Health & Safety Authority (HSA)
- Road Safety Authority (RSA)
- An Garda Síochána

Driver rules and legal requirements

Induction

All new drivers must be provided with induction training by their employer before being allowed to drive a commercial vehicle.

Driver rules

Do not engage in any operation that will put you or your fellow workers at risk!

- You must hold a valid driving licence for the vehicle being driven and carry it while driving
- You must have a valid driver qualification card
- If using a vehicle with a digital tachograph you must have a valid driver digital card
- You must follow the rules of the road, be aware of other road users especially the most vulnerable – older pedestrians and cyclists, children, motor cyclists and learner drivers
- You must wear a safety belt on every journey
- You must complete and record a vehicle walk around check prior to using the vehicle
- You should keep reversing to a minimum. It is a Coillte requirement that an 'Audible Reversing Alarm' is fitted to the vehicle
- You must exercise maximum care while driving on public roads to prevent injury to personnel and damage to vehicles, buildings, loads etc
- Smoking is not allowed in the work vehicle and is restricted to designated areas only on site
- Wear appropriate PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

Driver key legal requirements

There are laws which you must comply with when working in this industry. These are set out in this handbook.

You must ensure that you know about these laws and the rules and all instructions that are issued by your employer from time to time. Breach of these laws, the company rules, procedures and instructions

can result in disciplinary action and may render you personally liable to prosecution.

As a professional driver you have a responsibility to drive in a professional and safe manner. It is incumbent on you to be familiar with the legislation as failure to recognise your responsibilities to drive and operate within the law can have far reaching consequences, not just for you and your family but also your employer and other road users.

Whilst driving your vehicle you must be familiar with the legal obligations covered under the following legislation

- Working Time Act/Directive
- Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness Act 2012
- SI 348 – driver defect reporting
- Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Road Traffic Acts
- *Rules of the Road*

Enforcement authorities

- Road Safety Authority (Est 2006)
- Health and Safety Authority (Est 1989)
- An Garda Síochána
- Customs and Excise

Driving is classified as a hazardous activity but it is a fundamental part of the forestry industry; the timber haulage industry has taken steps to reduce identifiable risks as far as reasonably practicable.

The precautions outlined are not intended to be an exhaustive list; however in an attempt to reduce the risk to an acceptable level they should always be followed.

Vehicle operator responsibilities

- Ensure that all vehicles are maintained in a safe and roadworthy condition in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and the legal requirements as detailed in SI 348, 2013
- Provide the appropriate equipment in a well maintained and at a minimum legally compliant condition
- Provide equipment to suit the specific operation, including such items as on-board weighing, central tyre inflation, on-board computers including tracking



- Ensure that drivers are trained and certified (where appropriate) on any specialised equipment used in the operation such as cranes, on-board weighing, central tyre inflation as well as forest road operation
- Ensure that where a crane is fitted, it is inspected and certified annually by a competent person



Driver responsibilities

- Must drive in a safe and competent manner, in accordance with Ireland and EU driving laws
- Ensure that the driving time and working time rules are adhered to
- Ensure that the required break and rest period rules are adhered to
- Report immediately, to the relevant person and your company, the development of any health problem which may limit or prevent your ability to drive safely
- Prior to the start of your day's work, or if taking over a vehicle for the first time, you are required to undertake a routine inspection of the vehicle to ensure all aspects affecting safety are satisfactory
- Report immediately to the relevant person at your company any defects to vehicles or equipment
- On the road, you must co-operate with any Customs officer, Road Safety Authority representative, Health and Safety Authority representative or any member of the Garda Síochána

CRANE OPERATORS

The driver must be competent in crane operation and be in possession of a valid crane operating certificate to NPTC (City and Guilds 0020-28).

By law your employer needs to make sure that when you are driving for work you are:

- legally entitled to drive the vehicle you are using
- using a vehicle that is safe and roadworthy
- properly informed, trained, competent and fit to drive it safely
- using the vehicle safely
- subject to annual licence checks
- up to date with your Driver CPC qualification (where applicable)

In addition you must:

- be covered by appropriate insurance
- ensure the tax disc and insurance disc are valid and displayed
- follow the *Rules of the Road*
- ensure the vehicle has a valid Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness Test (CVRT)
- ensure that for vehicles with crane you have a valid GA1 Certificate

Note: Before driving any motor vehicle in a public place a person must hold a current full driving licence for that category of vehicle.

The following table gives details of the licence categories of vehicles that apply in Ireland.

Ireland vehicle licence categories			
A1	Motorcycles not over 125cc with or without sidecar	D	Vehicles with passenger accommodation for more than 8 persons
A	Motorcycles with or without sidecar	EB	Vehicles in category B with a trailer attached where the MAM of the trailer is not greater than 3,500kg
B	Vehicles with passenger accommodation for 8 persons or less and with a design MAM not over 3,500kg	EC1	Vehicles in category C1 with a trailer attached
C1	Vehicles with passenger accommodation for 8 persons or less and with a design MAM over 3,500kg but not over 7,500kg	EC	Vehicles in category C with a trailer attached
C	Vehicles with passenger accommodation for 8 persons or less and with a design MAM over 3,500kg	ED1	Vehicles in category D1 with a trailer attached
D1	Vehicles with passenger accommodation for more than 8 persons but not more than 16 persons	ED	Vehicles in category D with a trailer attached
		W	Work vehicles and land tractors, with or without a trailer attached

JARGON BUSTER

Maximum Permissible Weight (MPW)

The maximum a vehicle or trailer can legally weigh including the load, driver, fuel etc. It is shown on a special plate fixed to the vehicle and is also usually shown in the manufacturer's handbook.

'Gross Vehicle Mass' (GVM), 'Maximum Authorised Mass' (MAM) or 'Maximum Gross Weight' (MGW) are sometimes used instead of Maximum Permissible Weight.

The driver

The following are guidelines that you should adhere to.

- **Professional conduct**

Remember that you are a driver of a heavy goods vehicle that is (in some cases) in the livery of your employer. You have regular face to face contact with the general public and clients, so you should conduct yourself as a professional, skilled person doing a demanding job day in and out

- **Personal honesty**

High standards of personal honesty and integrity are vital to the proper conduct and success of the forestry industry

- **Good defensive driving**

That means exercising concentration, observation and anticipation at all times

- **Courtesy to other road users**

Because you are a professional driver, you must make allowances for other road users' lack of skill and knowledge. Exercise your skills in the interests of road safety

- **Image**

Good driving means that you can help safeguard the reputation of the forestry industry

- **Speed**

There is more to defensive driving than simply complying with all legal maximum speed limits. Your speed should always be adjusted to the prevailing conditions

- **Keep your distance**

Cars should have at least a 2-second time gap between them. 'Only a fool breaks the 2-second rule', but it take longer for an HGV vehicle to stop. 'So know the score and make it 4!'

- **Weather conditions**

You must adjust your driving to the weather and visibility. Use your headlights when visibility is poor

- **Routeing**

Know your route; this will help keep you to your schedule and reduce stress during the day. Timber haulage drivers are required to

adhere to Designated Timber Haulage Routes and must be advised of them

- **Cyclists, pedestrians and animals**

These are vulnerable to all motorised traffic. Remember that a bicycle or motorbike should be given at least the same room as a small car when being overtaken. Check your mirrors and pay special attention to this when turning at roundabouts and junctions. Many pedestrians and athletes use the forestry tracks as a 'safe' place to exercise

- **Reversing**

Always reverse in a slow steady manner, check for people, maintain good all round visibility and be aware of your surroundings. It is a Coillte requirement that an 'Audible Reversing Alarm' is fitted to the vehicle

- **Load securing**

Always check that the load is safely secured prior to departure in accordance with HSA and industry guidelines. Prior to moving any load check that you have sufficient stanchions and strapping, that the strapping is in good condition and that the stanchions are in the appropriate location for your load. For more information see HSA information sheet on *Safe Load Securing of Round Timber*:

- www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Work_Related_Vehicles/Round_Timbers_Information_Sheet.pdf
- Coillte Round Timber Transport – *Guidelines for Hauliers and Drivers*: www.coillte.ie/our-business/our-products/wood-about/

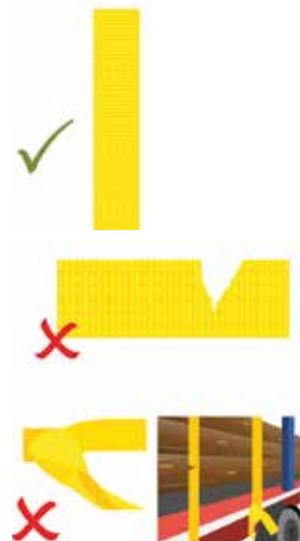
- **Vehicle weight**

You must ensure that the vehicle is loaded within legal weight limits for the vehicle and trailer combination

Dress code

The following Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) MUST be worn on site.

- Steel toed boots
- Hard hat
- High visibility vest
- High visibility jacket



FACT

Alcohol is a factor in almost 40 per cent of fatal road accidents!

(RSA report 2016 www.rsa.ie)

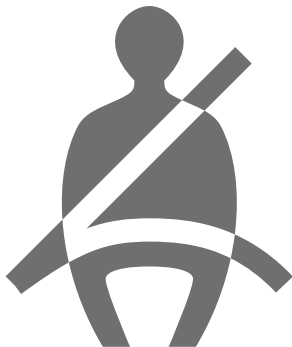
! KEY POINT

You are legally obliged to carry your driving licence with you when you drive a vehicle.

THE BEST ADVICE IS NEVER EVER DRINK AND DRIVE

SMOKING BREAK

When taking a smoking break you must take the break away from your vehicle. Make sure the vehicle is secure at all times.



**SEAT BELTS
ARE
FOR
EVERYONE**

All drivers should wear clothing as appropriate for the job, taking account of weather conditions and the nature of the work to be carried out. No 'baggy' clothing should be worn!

All must be in a presentable state.

Drugs (including prescription drugs) and alcohol

The consumption of alcohol or drugs (including prescription drugs) impairs judgement, makes drivers over-confident and likely to take risks. It slows reactions, increases stopping distances, affects judgement of speed distance and reduces the field of vision. Drivers are not allowed to enter a vehicle or drive if they are under the influence of any substance that impairs their judgement.

Drivers under the influence of drink and/or drugs kill and injure many people every year.

- The legal drink drive limit is 50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood
- **The limit for professional drivers (whilst driving for hire and reward) is 20mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood**

The 'morning after' is a dangerous time for impaired driving. It takes 1 hour for your body to process 1 unit of alcohol.

Smoking in the vehicle

Under the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts 2002-2015, smoking is forbidden in commercial vehicles.

Ergonomic issues

You should adjust your seat so that you are in a comfortable position and not stretching towards the steering wheel. The back of the seat should be slightly tilted back. The back rest helps support the lower curve of the spine.

The headrest of the seat should be positioned so that your head is resting on it. The seat should be positioned so that your legs form a right angle with the floor and have easy reach of the pedals.

Seat belts

Seat belts save lives by keeping people in their seats in the event of a crash – it has been proven that they help prevent deaths and injuries in such situations.

It is compulsory for all drivers and passengers - if any - to wear seat belts. It is your responsibility to ensure that seat belts are used. Please wear the seat belt correctly.

Mobile phone policy

The use of mobile phones in certain circumstances produces a risk not only to you but also to others in the vicinity, as your attention may be distracted.

Under 'The Road Safety Act 2006' the use of hand-held mobile phones whilst driving is illegal and any individual caught will receive automatic penalty points on their licence and will be subject to a fixed penalty charge.

Any points incurred from the use of a hand-held mobile phone while driving must be notified immediately to your employer.

Mobile phones should not be operated under any circumstances in a potentially flammable or explosive atmosphere. This includes areas for storage of flammable liquids, eg petrol stations and storage areas for explosive devices, such as air bags.

It is important to report all incidents to your office; it is for your own protection.

You should carry out your duties in a manner which reflects the important nature of the business, remaining security conscious at all times.



Road safety

Why is road safety important?

Road safety affects everyone whether you are driving or are a passenger. Driver behaviour is accountable for 90 per cent of all road traffic collisions.



As a commercial vehicle driver, you have a heightened responsibility. Because you travel more and spend more hours on the road than normal drivers the risk of being involved in, or causing, collisions on the road increases. You can set a good example to others by driving safely, courteously and with consideration for everyone else on the road.

Importantly you have, because of the size of vehicle you are driving, the potential to cause more injury and damage than other road users with whom you share the road.

Fatigue

Fatigue (also called exhaustion, lethargy) is the physical and mental impairment brought about by inadequate rest over a period of time.

Research indicates that **one in every five crashes on Irish roads could be caused by driver fatigue**. The Road Safety Authority (RSA) urges road users to be aware of the warning signs of driver fatigue, know the risks and keep yourself and your family safe (www.rsa.ie).

Common symptoms of driver fatigue are:

- inability to stay in a lane
- you have missed your exit
- not sure of where you are
- heavy eyelids
- day-dreaming
- blurred vision
- poor concentration
- slowed reactions
- impatience



Driving

Speed

A speed limit is the maximum legal speed, but not necessarily the safe speed, at which a vehicle should be driven. It is your responsibility to obey speed limits and to ensure that the vehicle speed is appropriate for the prevailing circumstances, even if that speed is lower than the speed limit applying.

Speed limits are set for roads and for vehicles.

Irish speed limits	
Road classification	Maximum speed
Motorways	90km/h
National roads	80km/h
Regional roads	80km/h
Urban areas	50km/h
Special limits (schools etc)	30km/h

Always allow enough space between you and the vehicle in front, paying particular attention to driving conditions. Typical guidance would advise to follow the 2-second rule. However, as vans and HGVs are much heavier than cars (even without a full load) you should always allow at least 4 seconds between you and the vehicle in front.

Counting time to create space in front of your vehicle	
Speed km/h	Seconds behind vehicle in front
25	3.0
40	3.5
60	4.5
75	5.0
90	5.5
100	6.0-7.0

If the road is wet, traffic is heavy, or vision is restricted, double the gap between your vehicle and the one in front. **In icy or slippery conditions allow up to 10 times the normal gap.**

Impact of your speed on pedestrians	
Impact speed	Risk of pedestrian death
30km/h	5%
50km/h	45%
60km/h	85%

Reference: *Safe Driving for Work (drivers handbook)* www.rsa.ie



Motorway driving

Motorways are the safest type of road, but also the least forgiving. High speed driving means that dangerous situations develop quickly. Vehicles travel much further before drivers even start to react. If you drive too close to the vehicle in front, forget to use mirrors or signal before moving out, it could have disastrous consequences for you and other road users.

- If your vehicle breaks down on the motorway, pull onto the hard shoulder as far to the left as possible, with the wheels turned to the left
- Leave your side lights on and switch on the hazard warning lights
- Advise your office of the situation and await instructions – make sure you can describe your location – look out for landmarks which will help pinpoint your location and direction of travel
- If you have a reflective jacket in the vehicle wear it – do not use a warning triangle on the hard shoulder
- Do not attempt even simple repairs, in all cases you should wait for emergency assistance
- To re-join the carriageway, build up speed on the hard shoulder and watch for a safe gap in the traffic. Be aware that other vehicles may be stationary on the hard shoulder

Driving in the forest

Trucks have been involved in incidents that have resulted in death and serious injury of drivers and other road users while transporting logs and other forest products.

The main factors involved with these deaths are:

- vehicle collisions
- truck roll overs
- logs and other material falling off trucks

These risks are more severe on forest roads.

To address these issues you must:

- ensure speed is appropriate for the road conditions and load configuration and adhere to any instructions in respect of the route to be taken, such as using the agreed route
- check lashing tension is maintained throughout the journey
- ensure there are no unrestrained logs or other debris that can fall from the top, back or side of the load

Coupling and uncoupling trailers

Fatal and serious accidents to drivers and damage to property occur when trucks and their trailers run away when the correct coupling and uncoupling procedures are not followed.

Air and electrical connections between truck and trailer

Modern trucks have two airlines which supply the trailer with air – the 'red' line supply airline and the 'yellow' service airline.

The yellow service airline and the red supply airline operate in conjunction with one another and provide additional safety functions, one of which is to ensure controlled trailer braking should the service airline fail.

The red supply line has two functions.

- To supply air to the trailer air tanks
- To control the emergency trailer brakes; in the event of loss of air pressure, for example if the trailer becomes detached or the supply airline is broken, the trailer emergency brakes will activate

When the driver applies the vehicle brakes during normal driving conditions, air is supplied to the trailer through the yellow service airline and the trailer brakes are applied.



Uncoupling procedure

For standard semi-trailers (where there is room to operate safely between the rear of the tractor cab and the front of the semi-trailer).

- Park the combination in a straight line
- Apply the tractor unit parking brake, stop the engine and remove the keys
- Apply the trailer parking brake. This typically features a valve with a push/pull button. Pulling the button out applies the trailer parking brakes; pushing the button in releases the parking brakes. **The trailer parking brake must be applied at all times when a trailer is uncoupled from the truck**
- Remove and stow the trailer number plate
- Check that the surface is suitable before lowering the landing legs
- Disconnect all of the air and electrical services and stow safely
- Remove the security dog clip and pull the release handle to disengage the fifth wheel jaws
- Slowly draw the tractor unit forward, when the fifth wheel clears the pin, stop the vehicle, apply the parking brake, and lower the suspension of the tractor unit

REMEMBER

Before pulling away walk around the combination to check that everything is in order. These checks should include the routine requirements of oil, water, fuel, windscreen and mirrors, truck and trailer wheels and tyres for security and legality, bodywork and ancillary equipment.

It is also the responsibility of the driver to check that the load is secure and that the in-cab height indicator is correct.

The driver should turn on the ignition to check that the ABS/EBS warning lamp(s) activate in the correct sequence and extinguish.

If for any reason the combination appears unroadworthy do not proceed but seek assistance.

On pulling away, test the brakes to ensure correct operation and that, if fitted, the ABS warning lamp on the trailer functions correctly and extinguishes when a speed of 15kph is exceeded.

- Then disengage the parking brake, and move clear of the trailer
- Before leaving the trailer, walk round it to check that it is in a safe condition

Coupling procedure

For standard semi-trailers (where there is room to operate safely between the rear of the tractor cab and the front of the semi-trailer).

- Slowly reverse the tractor unit in a straight line towards the front of the trailer
- Apply the tractor unit parking brake, stop the engine and remove the keys
- Check the trailer parking brake is applied
- Make any necessary adjustments to the trailer coupling height and slowly reverse the tractor unit under the trailer until the fifth wheel jaws engage
- Apply the tractor unit parking brake, stop the engine and remove the keys
- Carry out a visual check that the fifth wheel jaws have engaged correctly and fit the security dog clip or other safety device
- Carry out a second test to see that the fifth wheel jaws have engaged by selecting a low forward gear and with the trailer brakes still applied, slowly pull forward
- Apply the tractor unit parking brake, stop the engine and remove the keys
- Connect the service airline (yellow) and electrical connections
- Connect the emergency airline (red) and watch for any unexpected movement. If the trailer moves, immediately disconnect the emergency airline (red) and check that the trailer parking brake has been applied
- Wind up the landing legs and secure the handle
- Fit the number plates and check that the lights work
- Carry out visual and functional vehicle checks
- Check the load security and release the trailer handbrake before setting off

Reversing

You must be attentive at all times when reversing. Always reverse at a slow steady speed. Never reverse blind. Stop the vehicle if necessary and get assistance if available. The people at risk in this instance are loaders working at the vehicle, pedestrians, including children and other road users.

**KEY POINT**

It is a Coillte requirement that an **'Audible Reversing Alarm'** is fitted to the vehicle.

- Reduce the requirement to reverse where possible
- Reverse towards the driver side
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Know where your colleagues are
- Always request assistance (where possible) with reversing

Banksman

- Where possible when reversing (particularly for larger vehicles where natural blind spots occur) you should engage a banksman
- When using a banksman it is very important to complete the manoeuvre efficiently; you and the banksman using a system of signalling that is simple and easily understood by both
- A banksman should position themselves approximately 2 metres to the rear and 1 metre to the right of the vehicle so that they can be clearly seen by the driver in the mirror
- You should lower the driver side window (and make sure the radio is switched off)
- The banksman should move with the vehicle ensuring the driver can see him/her at all times and use of all his/her senses
 - Should you lose sight of the banksman you should stop immediately
- The banksman must beware of not getting trapped

Pedestrians and cyclists

Pedestrians and cyclists are vulnerable road users and can be encountered every day whilst driving on public roads, within forestry boundaries or in service stations, loading and unloading areas. Due care and attention must be given to these groups.

- When stopped at traffic lights pay attention and look out for pedestrians and cyclists and check your mirrors
- Reverse with great care
- Always check your mirrors when turning at junctions

Weather conditions and seasonal hazards

The weather can cause all kinds of driving hazards, especially reduced visibility and slippery road surfaces. During inclement weather it is incumbent on you to be extra vigilant.

Is your vehicle weather ready? Well maintained vehicles are less likely to have problems in extreme weather conditions.

BE WINTER READY!

- Check tyre thread limits
- Make sure the battery is in good condition
- Ensure windscreen and windows are clean
- Ensure windscreen wash is full and has a concentration of anti-freeze

Tachographs and working time

Tachograph information

Tachographs are required for all vehicles in excess of 3,500kgs MAM. You are responsible for managing the tachograph correctly. You must insert your card/chart at the start of your shift. Do not drive any vehicle without a digital card or analogue chart inserted in the machine.

You cannot drive a vehicle with a digital tachograph unless you have a valid driver digital card; you must carry the card with you at all times. If driving a vehicle with an analogue tachograph you must carry 28 calendar days of charts and/or your digital driver card at all times.



Tachograph mode switches

Remember to change modes, failure to do so can cause rest infringements that do not actually exist. **Remember a rest break is only legal when longer than 15 minutes.**

It is your responsibility to operate the switch mechanisms so that the following periods of time can be recorded separately and distinctly.

- **Driving**



The duration of driving activity, recorded automatically by the vehicle unit or manually by the driver. All tachographs will automatically default to driving when the vehicle is in motion. There is no need to put the switch to the drive symbol

- **Other Work/the Hammers**



All non-driving work including, but not confined to, completing the pre-use walk around check, checking/securing load, loading and unloading. Digital tachographs may automatically default to this symbol when you stop driving. Check the unit prior to moving. Analogue tachographs must have the mode switch set to this symbol

- **Period of Availability (POA)**



Time when you are not on a rest break, not driving, but you are available to carry out other work and you are at your post. PoA can only be chosen if the driver is aware of the duration of the period in advance

- **Break/Rest**



You must take a break of at least 45 minutes after completing 4.5 hours accumulative driving. This may be taken in one 45 minute break or split into TWO breaks with the first break being at least a minimum of 15 minutes and the second break at least a minimum of 30 minutes.

A break must be at least 15 minutes to qualify as a break.

REMEMBER

$$\text{WORKING TIME} = \text{DRIVING TIME} + \text{OTHER WORK}$$

Summary of drivers' hours regulations	
Daily driving	Limited within the 24-hour period from the start of your shift 9 hours may be extended to 10 hours twice a week
Weekly driving	Maximum of 56 hours in a week
Fortnightly driving	Maximum of 90 hours total in any two consecutive weeks
Breaks	Minimum 45 minutes after 4½ hours of continuous or aggregate driving. Alternatively, this break can be split into two periods; the first at least 15 minutes, the second at least 30 minutes
Daily rest	In each 24 hours a daily rest must be taken
Regular	At least 11 hours
Reduced	Less than 11 hours but at least 9 hours No more than three reduced daily rests between any two weekly rest periods
Split rest	A regular rest period can be taken in two separate periods; the first period at least 3 hours, the second at least 9 hours
Multi-manning	At least 9 hours within 30 hours at the end of a daily or weekly rest period
Ferry/train crossing	Only a regular daily rest of at least 11 hours can be interrupted and not more than twice; the aggregate interruption must not exceed 1 hour in total and the rest must be at least 11 hours nett
Weekly rest	After a maximum of 6 x 24-hour periods a weekly rest must be taken
Regular	At least 45 hours
Reduced	At least 24 hours (in any two consecutive weeks either; two regular rest periods or one reduced)
Compensation	A reduced weekly rest period must be compensated en-bloc by the end of the third week following the reduction and attached to another rest period of at least 9 hours
Week – 00.00 Monday – 24.00 Sunday	

REMEMBER

These regulations make sense when you consider that obeying them:

- protects you from legal penalties, fines etc
- protects your employer from the same penalties and protects your job!



Digital cards and analogue tachograph charts

- **Drivers must ensure that all correct driving hours and breaks are adhered to**
- **Failure to do this is your sole responsibility**
- A transport undertaking shall organise the work in such a way that you are able to comply with drivers' hours and working time rules
- The driver card must be downloaded at least once every 21 days
- The transport undertaking shall properly instruct the driver and shall make regular checks to ensure that the rules are complied with
- Any fines incurred for misuse of the digital tachograph must be paid by you
- You will not be considered for any further work in a particular week if you have exceeded your available driving hours
- This will be policed by the company's designated transport manager
- All reports will be downloaded and filed on a weekly basis and hard copies will be kept
- You must check there are two spare tachograph rolls in the cab of the vehicle at all times. For vehicles with analogue tachograph units there must be spare unused charts
- If your tachograph is not working you must report it to the appropriate officer at your employer and follow your employer's procedures

Split shift

A split shift becomes important when it requires a driver to take a split daily rest.

It is possible to take a split daily rest every day providing there is a rest of at least 3 hours and a further rest of at least 9 hours in a 24-hour period.

Working time rules

Working time (including driving)

- Must not exceed an average of 48 hours a week over a reference period
- Maximum working time of 60 hours in one week (between weekly rests)
- Maximum working time of 10 hours if night work performed (between midnight and 04.00) unless an agreement is in place

Breaks

- You cannot work for more than 6 hours without a break. A break should be at least 15 minutes' long
- You must take a 30-minute break if working between 6 and 9 hours in total
- You must take a 45-minute break if working more than 9 hours in total

Safe vehicle

As your employer provides you with a vehicle, they must make sure that the vehicle is properly registered, taxed, has a Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness Test (CVRT) as well as being insured. They are also required to have the vehicle serviced in line with the manufacturer's recommendations.



As a driver, by law, you must make sure that any vehicle you drive on a public road is maintained and used so that it is unlikely to cause a danger to anyone.

The vehicle you are driving must have the following.

- A Certificate of Roadworthiness (Section 18 of the Road Traffic Act 1961) if it is more than one year old
- Comply with all Construction, Equipment and Use Regulations (Section 11 Road Traffic Act 1961) relating to key items including wheels, tyres, brakes, lighting, steering and suspension
- SI 348 requires that before driving a vehicle or combination of vehicles in a public place, a person shall:
 - conduct a visual inspection of the interior of the vehicle or combination of vehicles, and
 - walk around the vehicle or combination of vehicles and conduct a visual inspection of the exterior

To ensure vehicles are kept in a roadworthy condition, in compliance with current legislation, it is your responsibility to ensure that there are no obvious defects or deficiencies to the vehicle that you drive.



KEY POINT

Check your vehicle every day.
It will help to make sure that you are:

- complying with the law
- that the vehicle you are driving is safe for you and other road users
- you can complete your job on time and are not delayed because of breakdowns

If you are stopped at a roadside check and it is found that your vehicle is defective or does not comply with the law, you can be taken to court, prosecuted and, if found guilty, be fined, receive penalty points or be sent to prison. The vehicle can be impounded.

Before setting out – driver checks

You must complete a thorough walk around inspection of the vehicle and its equipment prior to commencing work. This should be done every time you pick up a new vehicle or trailer. This inspection enables you to determine if the vehicle is roadworthy. The check should not take long and may save your driving licence, job or even a life!

If the check identifies a defect the details must be advised to the appropriate person before departure. You must record the details of the defect in the appropriate defect report or electronically prior to departure.

Vehicle inspection sheet (sample HGV)

Walk about check items to be checked before and while driving the vehicle.

Driver _____		Date _____		Location _____	
Vehicle _____		Trailer _____		Odometer _____	
Daily vehicle check – items to be checked by driver before and during driving: Function, Damage, Cleanliness etc.					
✓ Serviceable ✗ Defect					
Lamps/Indicators/Stoplamps		Tyres – <i>inflation, damage, wear</i>		Exhaust – <i>condition, smoke, emission</i>	
Reflectors/Markers/Warning devices		Wheels – <i>condition, security</i>		Tachograph/Speedometers – <i>operation</i>	
Battery – <i>security, condition</i>		Body/Guards/Wings/Spray suppression – <i>damage</i>		Speed limiter – <i>operation</i>	
Mirrors – <i>condition, security</i>		Body/Load – <i>security, protection</i>		Trailer coupling – <i>operation, condition</i>	
Brakes – <i>pressure, operation, leaks</i>		Number plates – <i>condition, security, illumination</i>		Trailers connections – <i>condition, function, leaks</i>	
Brakes – <i>warning devices, instruments</i>		Horn/Wipers/Washers – <i>operation, condition</i>		Trailer landing legs – <i>condition, operation</i>	
Driving controls/Steering – <i>wear, operation</i>		Engine oil/Water/Fuel – <i>levels, leaks</i>		Ancillary equipment/Loading aids etc	
Tax disc	CVRT	Insurance		Warning triangle	Fire extinguisher
Trailer clean	Bark	Debris		Branches	No loose items
Loading straps	Number	Condition	Frayed	Damaged	Knotted
Bunks/stanchions	Condition	Cracks	Damaged	Leaning outward	
If sliding bunks are used is the securing apparatus in good condition?				Spillage kit	
if fitted with a crane	Certification expiry date			Signs of leak or damage	

You need to check both the interior and exterior of the vehicle before driving.

As you approach the vehicle check that it is not leaning to either side or that there are any signs of leaks underneath.

Interior

- Fluid levels – oil, coolant and windscreen wash levels are correct (check when cold)
- The dashboard – all warning instruments work properly
- Wipers and washers work
- Parking brake and service brakes work properly
- Seat adjusted to correct position and seat belt work properly
- Ensure the cab of the vehicle is clean and all litter is removed
- All lights work – including hazards, indicators, reversing and brake lights
- Tax, insurance and CVRT – check for in date discs on display in the windscreen
- First aid kit and fire extinguishers are present in the vehicle, have not been tampered with and are in date
- Mirrors are fitted, clean and adjusted properly

Exterior

- Tyres – undamaged (no cuts or bulges), are at the correct pressure and have enough tread depth all round. The legal minimum is 1.6mm, but above 3mm gives much shorter braking distances
- Straps – adequate number of load straps in good condition, no evidence of fraying, knots or damage and complete with labels
- Bunks or stanchions - in good condition, no cracks or damage and not leaning outwards
- Adequate securing method for sliding bunks, if fitted
- Crane – (if fitted) in working order, certification in date
- Number plates, light lenses and reflectors – fitted, working and clean
- Fuel tank – secure, no leaks, proper fuel cap is fitted and locked where applicable
- Vehicle/trailer body – body area is clean with no debris, bark or branches and no loose items

Preventative maintenance reduces the likelihood of accidents and costly time consuming breakdowns.

Fuel economy

Defensive driving means safe driving! It is the art of driving to avoid preventable accidents and avoid contributing to others being involved in accidents.

A preventable accident is one that you as a professional driver can avoid by doing everything you reasonably can. This means always being alert to what other road users are doing and taking appropriate action to prevent an accident.

A defensive driving style is also a fuel efficient driving style. Smooth driving increases the number of kilometres your vehicle does for every litre of fuel it uses.

Vehicle security

When leaving your vehicle unattended the following rules should be observed.

- Apply vehicle brakes securely
- Immobilise vehicle if possible
- Always check your vehicle and load prior to recommencing your journey
- Never leave the keys in the ignition when away from the vehicle. If the vehicle is stolen the insurance will be void if the keys were in the ignition
- Make sure all doors are closed correctly

Troubleshooting

- All delays must be reported immediately to management
- All accidents must be reported immediately
- In the event of an accident you must complete the Incident report form available from the machinery yard

TOP TIPS FOR DEFENSIVE AND GREEN DRIVING

- Plan your journey
- Manage the weight on the vehicle
- Check tyre pressure regularly
- Only run the engine when you drive
- Drive calmly – avoid harsh acceleration and braking
- Concentrate, observe and anticipate
- Brakes to slow – gears to go!
- Don't pump the accelerator or rev the engine unnecessarily
- Watch your speed
- Keep your distance
- Monitor your vehicle roadworthiness



KEY POINT

Utilise the information provided by your vehicle's telematics system



Blue Tree Systems

Forestry operations

Forest timber collection

Coillte haulage site safety rules - June 2016

- Only authorised vehicles allowed on site at all times
- Minimise vehicle reversing where possible
- Turning areas must remain free from parked vehicles during loading operations to allow lorries drive in and turn which will minimise reversing
- Driver must maintain good all round visibility at all times and check for people when reversing and take due care when entering and exiting the forest
- Audible reversing alarm must be fitted and fully functional on all lorries
- Barriers must remain open and in a secure position during working times and forest roads must remain free of parked vehicles (other than the lorry which is loading timber) to facilitate emergency vehicles for access and egress in the event of an accident
- Contractor must have an up-to-date and adequate Safety Statement or relevant extracts of it available in the vehicle
- When working alone ensure that effective lone working procedures are in place
- An up-to-date emergency plan with relevant telephone numbers must be available to the driver in the vehicle
- Driver must be competent in crane operation and be in possession of a valid crane operating certificate to NPTC (City and Guilds 0020-28)
- Driver must be trained in basic first aid and manual handling and be in the possession of valid certificates. Driver must have an adequate and up-to-date first aid kit in the vehicle
- Driver must not exceed the maximum speed limit of 25kph on forest roads. Lower speeds should apply where appropriate, eg changing weather conditions and public usage
- Driver must wear adequate Personal Protective Equipment when exiting cab of truck (helmet, high visibility clothing, steel toe-cap boots)
- Drivers to adhere to all signage on site. When hauling from a site where harvesting operations are completed, hauliers must notify forestry work manager if 'Do not climb on timber stacks' signs are not in place. Where harvesting signage has been removed, drivers must erect their own signs to prevent access during operations
- Driver must not enter the risk zone of harvesting machines that are operating on site
- Stop work immediately if a machine or person enters your risk zone (20 metres approximately) while moving, loading, unloading and strapping loads
- Personnel on site must not enter the risk zone (20 metres approximately) of operating lorries
- When off-loading timber, stacks are to be constructed in a stable condition at appropriate safe stack height
- Care to be taken when operating near overhead powerlines (see guidelines FISA 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
- Driver must ensure that the load is secure before leaving the site and that there are no protruding branches or unstable logs
- Do not load above the level of the headboard and stanchions

Coillte haulage site safety rules - June 2016

- All loads should be strapped and re-tensioned as necessary, to comply with the current Forestry Industry Standard
- 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
- Transverse loading should only be undertaken when suitable side gates and appropriate strapping are used. The load must not be higher than the side gates
- Ensure timber stacks are left stable and in a safe condition after loading
- All vehicles and equipment must be appropriate to the site and have appropriate and valid certification (CVRT and GA1)
- Each loading and haulage unit must have an adequate pollution control kit
- Driver must adhere to 'Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice' and Coillte Coillte's 'Code of Practice for Timber Removals'
- All accidents, incidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences must be reported to the forestry work manager immediately

These haulage site safety rules apply to all sites and should be retained in the vehicle at all times

Round timber loads

Refer also to the *Coillte Forest Code of Practice for Timber Removals 2015*: www.coillte.ie/our-business/our-products/wood-about/

Due to their size, weight and configuration, consignments of round timber are high risk loads, where the consequences of load shift or load shed can be extremely serious. Round timber is a 'live' commodity, which can lead to independent movement of parts of the load if the restraint used is not adequate. It is essential that timber is not loaded to such a height, or in such a way, that the vehicle or load could become unstable. This will keep the centre of gravity as low as possible to make sure maximum vehicle stability is maintained (www.hsa.ie). See HSA load safety series information sheet for *Safe Load Securing of Round Timber*: www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Work_Related_Vehicles/

Forest roads

Forest roads are a major investment made by the grower. These roads can be designed to carry the same vehicles as public roads, but the effects of overloading and abuse are probably more immediately evident on them.

Forest roads open to haulage traffic need to be capable of :

- sustaining the loads imparted by the vehicles using the road. If vehicles are overloaded and/or exceed the design standard, damage to the road occurs (see relevant manual on the Coillte website – www.coillte.ie. Refer also to the *Managing Timber Transport Good Practice Guide*: www.coillte.ie/our-business/our-products/wood-about/)

Road defect reporting

Each timber grower, when offering timber for sale, needs to assess the road conditions and ensure that they are of an adequate standard and have in place a contingency plan in case the road deteriorates during haulage.

When driving on temporary forest roads you must:

- drive with care and caution
- be aware of your vehicle weight – do not travel near the edge of the road!
- mind your speed – in all weather conditions drive in a steady slow manner appropriate to the temporary nature of the road
- manage travel plans with other road users and colleagues
- never overload the axles

Loading timber in the forest

See *Round Timber Transport Guidelines for Hauliers and Drivers* on the Coillte website – www.coillte.ie

Loading timber is a potentially dangerous operation and hauliers must manage the safety of the loading activity. A risk assessment process should be undertaken. The person (consignor) engaging the haulage contractor must provide information on the hazards at the site and on access routes which may affect the haulage activity.

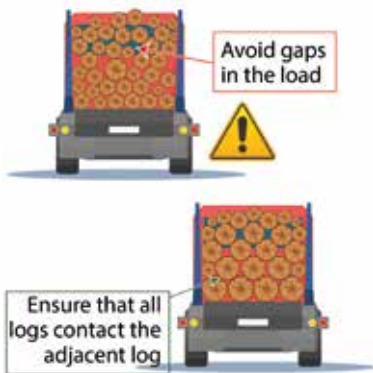
The public and others using the area must be warned of such activities. This can be achieved by supplying and erecting warning and prohibition signs (or barriers) when loading timber. You should erect warning signs on both sides of your vehicle indicating safe distances.

Before setting off on a journey, all tensioning devices must be adequately tightened and properly stowed. The load should be checked frequently for security and the lashings tested for adequate tension after a few miles and at intervals during the journey. Care should be taken that the remaining roadside stack is left in a safe manner following removal of the load.

Load securing

Why should loads be secured?

Between 2006 and 2011 there were 509 accidents that involved loading, unloading and load securing reported to the Health & Safety Authority. These accidents involved workers or members of the public being



struck by falling objects, workers falling from vehicles or slipping and tripping in loading areas. **Twelve of these accidents resulted in death.** The remainder of accidents resulted in injuries that led to substantial absences from work.

Reference: http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Vehicles_at_Work/Load_Securing/

Apart from the human cost, think about the impact of failing to safely secure loads may have on your business. You, vehicle occupants, other road users, pedestrians and anyone who may be involved in loading and unloading the vehicle could be injured or killed. Unsecured loads or objects may fall from vehicles and can cause road obstructions, traffic disruptions and collisions, especially if swerving to avoid them. The vehicle may also overturn. Certain vehicle spillages may cause other vehicles to skid and lose control. Unrestrained goods may crash into the vehicle cab during emergency braking.

Failure to secure a load properly can also result in financial losses from:

- damaged goods, vehicles, property and roads
- worker absence through injury
- clean-up costs
- damage to company reputation
- increased insurance premiums
- loss of control of the vehicle



Overhead lines

Refer to *Managing Timber Transport Good Practice Guide*: www.coillte.ie/our-business/our-products/wood-about/

Overhead power lines, where present, are a major hazard within the forest. It is the responsibility of the landowner to draw their presence to the attention of the purchaser and haulier of the timber and their location should be clearly marked on the harvesting and/or site plan and as part of the risk assessment procedure.

Before work commences, the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) should be contacted. Great care should be taken when loading and you should ensure that the operation is carried out a safe distance away from any overhead power cables. Similarly, driving within the forest should be on routes where power lines crossing the access road are clearly marked and can be safely passed. ESB guidelines on this subject are available and should be observed.

Health and safety

Night driving

Make sure your lights, indicators, reflectors and number plate lighting are clean and in a serviceable condition. Drive within a speed that allows you to stop within the distance covered by your lights. Do not wear tinted or sunglasses at night (or in poor visibility).

- Use headlights correctly to avoid dazzling other road users
- If dazzled by oncoming vehicles, slow down and stop if necessary

Correct use of lights

(www.rsa.ie)

- Always use full headlights when driving at night
- Never use your full headlights in the following circumstances:
 - in a built-up or special speed limit area where there is good street lighting
 - when stopped in traffic
 - when meeting oncoming traffic
 - if you see the red lights of a vehicle in front of you
 - while parked temporarily
 - wherever they may cause annoyance or distraction for other road users

Dipped headlights

Always use dipped headlights in the following circumstances.

- Just after the beginning (dusk) and before the end (dawn) of lighting-up hours
- When driving in a built-up or special speed limit area (for example, a residential area) where there is good street lighting
- When following close behind another vehicle or when you see their rear red lights
- Where there is dense fog, falling snow or heavy rain (fog lamps, if fitted, may only be used in heavy fog or falling snow)
- If the conditions require the use of headlights, then you must use them



Fog lights

In a survey carried out by the Road Safety Authority (RSA), 13 per cent of drivers were found to use fog lights inappropriately, that is, using fog lights when there was no fog or falling snow.

Working at height

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Work at Height) Regulations 2006, define working at height as 'working in a place (except a staircase in a permanent workplace) where a person could be injured by falling from height, even if it is at or below ground level'.

Therefore please take care and always:

- use steps and handrails getting into and out of your vehicle
- never jump from the back of the vehicle
- never jump from the steps of your vehicle

If you identify any safety issue with handrails or steps you must report these defects as part of your driver check sheet returns.

Accessing and egressing a vehicle

There is a potential for slips and falls to occur when accessing or egressing a vehicle. Care should be taken by all drivers and occupants.

Remember the three-point hold rule. This means that you should have at least three points of contact with the vehicle you are climbing (hands and feet), moving one limb at time and testing the new hold before moving on. Looping an elbow around a support is not considered adequate. A firm hand grip should be used.

- Access to a vehicle cab should be via well-constructed ladder or steps
- Dirt or grease should be removed from all steps and ladders on a regular basis
- Vehicle handrails should always be used, where available, when gaining access to or exiting from vehicles
- It is your responsibility to ensure that the steps and handrails on vehicles are maintained in good condition. You must report any damage to your supervisor manager as soon as practicable
- Care should be taken during windy conditions to ensure that vehicle door(s) are not caught by the wind and slammed shut or blown open
- You must take care that sufficient room is available around your vehicles to ensure both you and any passengers can safely access

REMEMBER

You can only use fog lights in dense fog or falling snow (if you cannot see more than 100 metres – about 25 car lengths).

Remember to switch them off when visibility improves. Using them in clear weather is a motoring offence and will risk causing glare or dazzling other drivers. Fog lights are an optional extra and not a legal requirement.



and egress from the vehicle, and to avoid causing damage to other property in the area

- When gaining entry to or exiting from a vehicle, it must be at a complete stop at all times
- Never jump from a vehicle. Use the ladder or steps and handrails in the reverse way to get down safely. You should be facing the vehicle at all times
- Always wear the appropriate PPE (footwear)
- Where vehicles have doors on both sides, be aware of climbing out into traffic



KEY POINT

Lone working

It is essential that you follow your employer's procedures on lone working at all times to ensure your safety.

Lone working, personal safety and vehicle security

It is essential that all security measures be complied with to ensure the safety of all staff and work vehicles.

To ensure the safety of staff and vehicles, you must:

- lock your vehicle when unattended, even for short periods of time
- secure all vehicles keys in a safe secure location when the vehicle is not in use for longer periods of time (eg overnight, weekends, bank holidays, etc)
- do not leave wallets, briefcases, mobile phones or other valuables on display in your vehicle
- secure all equipment and tools when your vehicle is unattended
- keep doors locked and windows closed when parked, stopped in traffic, stopped at junctions especially when travelling alone in the vehicle
- report any damage or faulty security features on vehicles to your supervisor/manager as soon as possible (ie doors not closing/locking properly, security alarms not working, etc)
- report any lost or stolen keys or items to your supervisor/manager
- use any extra security systems that are available for a vehicle, ie alarms, steering wheel locks, etc
- follow the safe procedure for parking at all times

Manual handling of loads

Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007. Manual handling of loads 'means any transporting or supporting of a load by one or more employees, and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving a load, which by reason of its characteristics or of unfavourable ergonomic conditions, involves risk, particularly of back injury, to employees.'

The regulations set no specific requirements such as weight limits. The HSA guidelines do offer numerical guidelines, which take into account weight, repetition and location of lift as a means of identifying activities which involve risk. In carrying out an assessment the assessor should take account of the nature of the work activities and have an appreciation of what realistic improvements can be put in place to avoid or reduce risk.

The highest risk areas are those where there is repeated daily handling of loads.

In general your employer must have regard that sensitive risk groups are protected when it comes to manual handling of loads, they must also ensure that you are capable of completing the required manual handling activities in a safe manner. Your management fully understands their responsibilities under the Safety, Health and Welfare (General Application) Regulations 2007 and under no circumstances do they encourage you to lift loads that exceed recommended weights. All drivers, either new or existing, must make their supervisor/manager aware if they have back pain or are incapable of lifting any size of load before they begin their day's work.

- Always use suitable mechanical aids when possible to alleviate the need for manual handling
- Always assess a load before deciding to lift:
 - check the weight
 - check where you will put the load
 - don't bend your back
 - bend your knees
 - move the load smoothly
- If there is a requirement to lift heavy items, you must assess it and decide if it is safe to lift on your own or if you need help from a colleague
- Push loads instead of pulling
- Ensure precautions are taken and that hand trucks or trolleys are used for heavier loads
- Take your time and do not carry out any function in a jerking motion

Weight limits

There is active enforcement in this area and you are responsible for ensuring the vehicle is not overloaded.

The European Union, via Directive 96/53/EC, sets the maximum authorised dimensions in national and international traffic and the

DRIVER PROCEDURE

You should ensure your vehicle is not overloaded and is kept within its declared Gross Vehicle Weight.



KEY POINT

It is an offence to carry a load on a vehicle which would cause the manufacturer's design weights or the limits specified in our national legislation (ie the plated weights) to be exceeded. On conviction, courts can impose a class C fine (up to €2,500), a prison sentence or both on you and on the owner of the vehicle.

maximum authorised weights in international traffic. This ensures that no obstacles are created which would prevent the circulation of commercial vehicles between member states. However, member states are entitled to set their own maximum authorised weights for domestic journeys. This directive has been transposed into Irish law by the Road Traffic (Construction & Use of Vehicles) Regulations 2003.

Maximum weights

Maximum legal weights are determined by a number of factors, including the spacing between the axles, the outer axle and bogie spread, the number of tyres on each axle, and the type of suspension fitted. Vehicles with Road Friendly Suspension (RFS) and twin tyres on the drive axle are permitted higher weights than those without. The majority of vehicles with RFS operate on air suspension, but some rubber and hydraulic suspension may also count as road friendly.

Penalties for breach of legislation

It should be noted that many vehicles are intended by design to operate at maximum weights which are less than the weights set out in the RSA Construction and Use Regulations. You should familiarise yourself with the maximum weight that applies to your vehicle, or combination of vehicles.

It is an offence to carry a load on a vehicle which would cause the manufacturer's design weights or the limits specified in our national legislation (ie the plated weights) to be exceeded. On conviction, courts can impose a class C fine (up to €2,500), a prison sentence or both on you and on the owner of the vehicle.

Where a vehicle owner is convicted of such an offence, further penalties are payable by the company (for vehicles with a laden weight exceeding 17 tonnes) with responsibility for the maintenance of the road on which the offence was committed – visit <http://www.rsa.ie/en/RSA/Your-Vehicle/Vehicle-Standards/Weights--Dimensions-/> for more information.

Operators must ensure that their drivers are aware of the maximum legal load limits for their vehicles. This must be demonstrable through training and or guidance documents. In addition load plans should be available to drivers and loaders to ensure the even distribution of weight over each axle.

Since 1 April 2013, all semi-trailers operating as part of a combination of vehicles with a gross weight in excess of 40 tonnes must meet the requirements of an 'appropriate semi-trailer'. This means that they (whether new or existing and irrespective of the number of axles fitted) must have anti-lock braking systems (ABS), a road friendly or

equivalent suspension system and be fitted with an authorisation plate (ie a national weights and dimensions plate).

Since 1 April 2013 owners/operators of six-axle articulated vehicle combinations have the option of operating at a gross combination weight of 46 tonnes, instead of 44 tonnes, which represents a 2 tonne increase over the pre-existing 44 tonne national limit, provided they satisfy the criteria in the table below.

Six-axle articulated vehicle combinations	What is required on or after 1 April 2013?
Triaxle tractor units and triaxle semi-trailers already in service prior to 1 April 2013	Electronic Braking System (EBS) and tractor unit plated at 46 tonne
New triaxle tractor units first registered on or after 1 April 2013	Electronic Braking System (EBS) and Electronic Stability Control (ESC) and plated at 46 tonne
Triaxle semi-trailers first licensed in Ireland on or after 1 April 2013	Electronic Braking System (EBS) and Roll Stability Control (RSC)

From 1 June 2015 six-(or more) axle rigid truck and drawbar trailer combinations are allowed to operate at a gross combination weight of 46 tonnes. This represents up to a 4 tonne increase over the pre-existing national weight limit and aligns with the limit applicable to six-axle articulated vehicle combinations which was introduced on 1 April 2013.

However, it is subject to vehicles meeting certain qualifying criteria. These are as follows.

Six-axle rigid truck and drawbar trailer combinations	What is required on or after 1 June 2015?
3 or more axle rigid trucks already in service prior to 1 June 2015	Road friendly or equivalent suspension system, Electronic Braking System (EBS) and plated at 46 tonne
New 3 axle rigid trucks first registered on or after 1 June 2015	Road friendly or equivalent suspension system, Electronic Braking System (EBS), Electronic Stability Control (ESC) and plated at 46 tonne
New 4 (or more) axle rigid trucks first registered on or after 1 June 2015	Road friendly or equivalent suspension system, Electronic Braking system (EBS) and plated at 46 tonne
2 (or more) axle drawbar trailers first licensed prior to 1 June 2015	Road friendly or equivalent suspension system and Electronic Braking System (EBS)
2 (or more) axle drawbar trailers first licensed on or after 1 June 2015	Road friendly or equivalent suspension system, Electronic Braking System (EBS) and Roll Stability Control (RSC)

Diesel

- Diesel oils can cause skin problems – therefore use gloves while refuelling the vehicle
- Always wear appropriate PPE

Procedure for vehicle breakdown



Good practice

Typically vehicles can breakdown due to mechanical reasons, punctured tyres, blown tyres etc.

- In the event of a breakdown where possible pull into the side of the road on a flat secure surface
- Immediately put on your hazard lights
- Contact the transport office immediately
- Assess the reason for the breakdown and relay information to base
- Know your location and have a landmark so that you can easily be located
- They will make arrangements for appropriate assistance to be sent to you

Procedure for accident reporting in event of a road traffic accident (RTA)

All incidents/accidents (no matter how small) must be notified to your supervisor/manager. Accident report forms must be completed within 24 hours of accidents taking place and returned to them.

- Contact your transport manager immediately and await instructions
- Contact emergency services
- Do not drive from the scene until you receive instruction
- Only move out of your vehicle if you are instructed to do so
- Never confront third parties in an aggressive or confrontational manner
- Complete the accident report form

Key contacts' names and numbers

Name	
Company	
Telephone	Fax
Mobile	Email

Name	
Company	
Telephone	Fax
Mobile	Email

Name	
Company	
Telephone	Fax
Mobile	Email

Name	
Company	
Telephone	Fax
Mobile	Email

Penalty points

Offences incurring penalty points and fixed charge notices at 17 April 2016				
Offences	Penalty points on payment	Penalty points on conviction	Amount paid in 28 days	Amount paid in next 28 days
			Fixed charge €	Fixed charge €
Using a vehicle with defective or worn tyres	2	4	80	120
Learner permit holder driving unaccompanied by qualified person	2	4	80	120
Failure to display N Plate or tabard	2	4	60	90
Failure to display L-Plate or tabard	2	4	60	90
Contravention of ban on U-turns	2	4	60	90
Contravention of rules for use of mini roundabouts	1	3	60	90
Proceeding beyond no entry to vehicles sign	1	3	60	90
Proceeding beyond a traffic lane control sign other than in accordance with such sign or without yielding	1	3	60	90
Using vehicle in a public place without an authorisation plate	3	5	60	90
Using vehicle in a public place that has been modified or altered such that authorisation plate is inaccurate	3	5	60	90
Using vehicle not equipped with a speed limitation device or using a vehicle equipped with a speed limitation device not complying with requirements specified in regulation	3	5	60	90
Proceeding beyond maximum vehicle length sign where length exceeds maximum displayed	1	3	60	90
Proceeding beyond maximum vehicle width sign where width exceeds maximum displayed	1	3	60	90
Proceeding beyond maximum design gross vehicle weight (safety) sign where design gross vehicle weight exceeds maximum displayed	1	3	60	90
Proceeding beyond maximum vehicle axle loading weight sign where vehicle axle loading weight exceeds maximum specified	1	3	60	90
Using vehicle (car) without valid test certificate (NCT)	3	5	60	90
Parking a vehicle in a dangerous position	3	5	80	120
Failure to drive on the left-hand side of the road	2	4	60	90
Dangerous overtaking	3	5	80	120
Contravention of prohibition of driving vehicle along or across median strip	2	4	60	90
Failure to stop a vehicle before stop sign/stop line	3	5	80	120

Offences incurring penalty points and fixed charge notices at 17 April 2016

Offences	Penalty points on payment	Penalty points on conviction	Amount paid	
			in 28 days Fixed charge €	in next 28 days Fixed charge €
Failure to yield right of way at a yield sign/yield line	3	5	80	120
Failure to comply with mandatory traffic signs at junctions	2	4	80	120
Crossing continuous white line	3	5	80	120
Failure by vehicle to obey traffic lights	3	5	80	120
Failure to leave appropriate distance between you and the vehicle in front	3	5	80	120
Driving vehicle before remedying dangerous defect	m*	3	Court fine	
Driving dangerously defective vehicle	m*	5	Court fine	
Using commercial vehicle without certificate of roadworthiness	m*	5	Court fine	
Bridge strikes, etc.	m*	3	Court fine	
Holding a mobile phone while driving	3	5	60	90
Failure to act in accordance with a Garda signal	1	3	80	120
Entry by driver into hatched marked area of roadway, eg carriageway reduction lane	1	3	80	120
Failure to obey traffic rules at railway level crossing	2	5	80	120
Driving a vehicle on a motorway against the flow of traffic	2	4	80	120
Driving on the hard shoulder on a motorway	1	3	80	120
Driving a vehicle subject to an ordinary speed limit of 90 kms per hour or less on the outside lane on a motorway	1	3	80	120
Failure to obey requirements at junctions, eg not being in the correct lane when turning onto another road	1	3	60	90
Failure to obey requirements regarding reversing of vehicles, eg reversing from minor road onto main road	1	3	60	90
Driving on a footpath	1	3	60	90
Driving on a cycle track	1	3	60	90
Failure to turn left when entering a roundabout	1	3	60	90
Failure to stop for school warden sign	2	5	80	120
Failure to stop when so required by a member of the Garda Síochána	2	5	80	120
Failure to yield	2	4	80	120
Driving without reasonable consideration	2	4	80	120
Failure to comply with prohibitory traffic signs	1	3	60	90
Failure to comply with keep left/keep right signs	1	3	60	90
Failure to comply with traffic lane markings	1	3	60	90

Offences incurring penalty points and fixed charge notices at 17 April 2016

Offences	Penalty points on payment	Penalty points on conviction	Amount paid in 28 days	Amount paid in next 28 days
			Fixed charge €	Fixed charge €
Illegal entry onto a one-way street	1	3	60	90
Driving a vehicle when unfit	m*	3	Court fine	
Breach of duties at an accident	m*	5	Court fine	
Speeding	3	5	80	120
Driving without insurance	m*	5	Court fine	
Driver of car or goods vehicle not wearing safety belt	3	5	60	90
Failure by driver to comply with rear seat belt requirements for passengers under 17 years	3	5	60	90
Driver of car or goods vehicle permitting child under 3 years of age to travel in it without being restrained by appropriate child restraint	3	5	60	90
Driver of car or goods vehicle permitting child over 3 years of age to travel in it without being restrained by appropriate child restraint	3	5	60	90
Driver of car or goods vehicle permitting child to be restrained by rearward facing child restraint fitted to a seat protected by active frontal airbag	3	5	60	90
Driver of bus not wearing safety belt	3	5	60	90
Driver found to be driving carelessly	m*	5	Court fine	
Using vehicle – (a) whose weight unladen exceeds maximum permitted weight, (b) whose weight laden exceeds maximum permitted weight, or (c) any part of which transmits to ground greater weight than maximum permitted weight	1	3	200	300
Drink driving offences (In all cases where the BAC is between 50mg and 80mg of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood)	3	n/a	200	

12 penalty points = automatic disqualification

Where the person was first issued with a learner permit on or after 1 August 2014, during the period the person drives under a learner permit and during the first two years while the person drives under a first full driving licence, then 7 penalty points = automatic disqualification!

* Mandatory court appearance

For more information visit penaltypoints.ie

Driver's confirmation

I have read this handbook.

I understand the handbook and agree to abide by its instructions and acknowledge that any significant breach may constitute a serious infringement on my record.

I agree to inform you of any changes to penalty points or endorsements on my licence.

A copy of

licence has been taken and all details have been checked.

Driver's signature:

Date:

Manager's signature:

Date:



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