

Workplace transport – Assessment Inspector Factsheet

The 5 steps of assessment can be used to systematically work through how the workplace is managing the risks of associated with workplace transport, and whether they meet their obligations under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992.



STEP 1. IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL HAZARDS

Look out for: Heavily loaded plant, obscured vision, excessive speed, passengers, unmaintained plant, raised loads on fork lifts/trucks, securing or untying loads at height, dangerous pedestrian/plant interaction, smell of exhaust fumes, evidence of accidents on vehicles/walls/bollards, steep sites, uneven ground, reversing/turning plant, noise.

Possible hazards: Crushing, trapping, run-over, roll-over, entanglement, amputation, turning, falls from height, collision, exhausts fumes, whole body vibration, noise, fire, radiation, falling objects.

Duty-holders knowledge and understanding: How has the employer identified hazards? Do they have a system in place that uses manufacturer’s information and specifications, approved codes, guidance and accident investigations? Have they done a task/area hazard analysis where the plant operates e.g. a traffic survey? Have they involved employees in the process?

STEP 2. ASSESSING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HAZARD

Has the employer taken the following into account?

Frequency of use, length of use, number of plant (and how they interact), operator competency, congestion (people and plant), tight spaces, accident history, speeds of operation, limitations (load, gradient, accessories), severity of potential injuries and health effects.

Have employees been involved in the assessment? Principals should also consider contractors operating plant.

STEP 3. IMPLEMENTING CONTROLS

Hierarchy of controls	Controls	
Eliminate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discontinue use ▪ Complete manually e.g. use carts, trolleys, palletizers (note new hazards) ▪ Substitute the plant e.g. use electric not fuel powered plant 	
Isolate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Separate pedestrian and mobile plant areas. ▪ Walkways for unloading 	
Minimise (level 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Traffic management system ▪ Buy safe 	
Minimise (level 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ROPS, FOPS, secure seating, footrests and seatbelts. ▪ Maintenance of plant, equipment and environment ▪ Restrict use in poorly ventilated areas ▪ Install carbon monoxide alarms ▪ Safe operating procedures ▪ Road markings, signage, lights ▪ Speed limits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stability management ▪ Clear load limits ▪ Sticking to manufacturers recommendations ▪ PPE ▪ Communication methods ▪ Not carrying passengers ▪ Information, training and supervision

Training, information and supervision.

Has the employer trained operators, managers, supervisors, purchasers, and staff that have input into the workplace design? Training needs to be refreshed at regular intervals and elements reinforced following accidents or violations of rules.

Operators should have a clear understanding of safe operating procedures, limitations and hazards of plant. Appropriate supervision is essential until competency can be proven. Qualifications and previous training do not necessarily mean an operator is competent to use plant.

Workplace transport – Assessment Inspector Factsheet

Contractors and visitors should be inducted, competency checked and made aware of hazards on site.

STEP 4. MONITORING AND MEASURING

a) Employers should undertake regular inspections/audits of:

- i) **Plant**
 - Plant should be regularly inspected (e.g. pre-start checks) and maintained in good working order
 - Log books may be used to monitor breakdowns and hours which can help in the design of a preventative maintenance programme
 - Fuel powered plant should be tuned regularly and tested for emissions.
- ii) **Traffic management system**
 - Areas in which mobile plant operate should be regularly inspected to ensure the system is properly implemented, followed and to check that the environment hasn't changed or introduced new hazards e.g. that could force a new unsafe route.
- iii) **People**
 - Safety observations can be used to monitor if operators are following safe operating procedures (e.g. speed limits and reversing practices).
- iv) **Air quality and ventilation systems**
 - Carbon monoxide levels should be monitored, especially where fuel powered mobile plant is used in buildings with poor ventilation and small/restricted/confined areas
 - Ventilation systems should keep the air change rate sufficient to minimise the concentration of fumes in the air. They must be inspected and maintained regularly to ensure they are in good, working condition.

b) Health monitoring

- i) Appropriate health tests should be undertaken in relation to any health risks identified e.g. blood and respiratory tests (exhaust fumes) and discomfort surveys. Duty-holders could discuss potential monitoring requirements with a qualified occupational health professional.
- ii) Employers should take all practicable steps to gain employees' consent to health monitoring when it is required. If an employee refuses, the employer should think about whether they should be removed from the risk area. Employers must provide the results of any health testing to the employee. Health monitoring can be included as a condition in employment agreements.

c) Investigating accidents/incidents

- i) Where a person is harmed at work, procedures must be in place to investigate why, how, what, who and where the incident happened. Any accidents should also be recorded in an accident register, which should be reviewed on regular basis to spot trends and patterns regarding people, processes, work areas, plant and equipment.

d) Worker engagement

- i) Operational staff are instrumental to continuous hazard identification. Staff should be encouraged to inform managers of hazards they come across and any noticeable deterioration to their health.
- ii) Talking point sessions about the hazards of mobile plant at the workplace are a great way to bring health and safety to the attention of workers. Workers can also be involved in investigations, monitoring and review.

STEP 5. REVIEWING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTROLS AND SYSTEMS

Review is central to continual learning and improvement of health and safety outcomes.

- Are controls reviewed regularly to check that they are still adequate?
- Is corrective action taken when incidents/accidents/audits/inspections/health monitoring show current controls aren't adequate?
- Are arrangements reviewed when introducing new equipment, plant or processes?

DOCUMENTATION TO REQUEST AND VERIFY

The following examples are documents a workplace could produce as evidence that they have met their legal obligations.

Job safety analysis	Inspection records	Maintenance records	Training records
Investigation reports	Incident/accident register	Breakdown log books	Health test results
Manufacturers information	Safe operating procedures	Health and safety policy	Employee surveys
Traffic management plan	Corrective action reports	Manufacturers specifications	Fit testing