



QBE Workplace Transport - Lift Trucks

Workplace Transport is a wide ranging term including 'on-site' and internal movement of road going vehicles such as vans and lorries, and mechanical handling equipment such as forklift trucks and other materials handling equipment. Each year there are approximately 20000 reportable injuries involving transport at work, a third of which involve lift trucks. Injury can be to pedestrians or the driver and many accidents can be fatal. Lift truck accidents often result in civil claims and can account for serious losses.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

1. Use of workplace equipment, including lift trucks, is subject to a risk assessment, identifying hazards to employees and non-employees, determining whether existing control measures are sufficient, and identifying any additional control strategies required.
2. Traffic routes are clearly and logically arranged, with adequate lighting, space to move safely, surface markings, signage, and avoidance of sharp bends and blind corners. Routes are organised to ensure vehicles spend minimum time in reverse.
3. Specific routes are provided for pedestrians with the aim of segregating people and vehicles. Controls such as speed limits, designated crossing points, barriers at entrances and exits and bridges/subways where traffic is heavy are considered.
4. Road surfaces are constructed with suitable materials, avoiding excessive gradients and slopes. A suitable system for maintenance and repair of surfaces is in place.
5. Drivers are selected according to aptitude, maturity, and medical fitness. Operators receive training by a competent training firm recognised by the HSE, with re-assessment and refresher training at pre-determined intervals. Additional training is provided for attachments used to carry out special tasks. Validation of training and competence is recognised by a formal licence for the vehicle and attachments. This is used as a sanction device by trained supervisors where safety rules are broken.
6. Appropriate vehicles are selected for the purpose of use. Standard equipment is stipulated, maintained in working order, and listed on operators' daily inspection list. Suitable seating, weather protection, roll-over protection systems, falling object protection systems, driver restraints, and appropriate warning signals are all considered according to the circumstances, and with reference to the risk assessment. Parts of lift trucks regarded as lifting equipment, or where they are used to lift people, are subject to statutory inspections by a competent person.
7. Where lift trucks are used to lift people, a purpose built platform or 'manbox' is the only method used (refer to HSE guidance). Trucks are never moved when carrying someone.
8. Daily inspections are carried out by drivers identifying the 'target condition' expected. Procedures are in place for reporting defects, and taking the vehicle out of use.
9. A routine maintenance inspection programme is in place through a competent in-house or external provider. Manufacturers' guidance is consulted to determine frequency of inspections, and records are kept of inspections and work completed.
10. Battery charging of electric trucks takes place in a designated and well ventilated area to prevent the build up of hydrogen (explosive gas) generated during recharging.
11. All incidents involving lift trucks are reported and investigated to determine underlying causes, and suitable remedial actions and controls implemented to prevent recurrence.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations contain provisions for risk assessment, and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations requires the provision of suitable & safe work equipment. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations require safe floors and the organisation of safe traffic routes. The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations contain provisions for safe lifting equipment and examination. Insured's should also consult the various approved codes of practice and guidance relating to the use of lift trucks.

GUIDANCE & USEFUL INFORMATION

- HSE Website 'vehicles at work' pages: [www.hse.gov.uk/vehicles at work/index/htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/vehicles%20at%20work/index/htm)
- Rider Operated Lift Trucks. Operator Training. Approved Code of Practise and Guidance L117
- Safety in Working with Lift Trucks HSG6
- Managing vehicle safety in the workplace INDG199

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