

HAULAGE

Diversifying into haulage allows the use of existing agricultural tractors and trailers for contract work for local farmers or other clients. It can also involve purchasing Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) for transporting animals, farm produce or other goods.

As well as the statutory requirements for the operation of the vehicles there is also a legal requirement to ensure that risk assessments are carried out and controls are put in place to protect workers and others.

OVERVIEW OF CONTROLS

The haulage sector has a high accident rate, with many accidents occurring during vehicle and trailer maintenance (e.g. due to raised vehicle and trailer bodies collapsing) and during loading and unloading involving; falling loads, falls from vehicles, slips and trips, manual handling and being struck by moving vehicles.

To reduce accidents 'Safe Stop' should be used during loading / unloading and maintenance (i.e. parking brakes applied, keys removed and all power isolated), drivers should stand in a safe place or remain in their cab, vehicle and trailer bodies must be propped during maintenance and drivers must not climb onto vehicle beds or loads.

VEHICLE AND ROAD SAFETY

The following list includes statutory requirements and control measures that you must consider to reduce the risk of accidents whilst working in and around vehicles:

- Ensure that all drivers have the correct class of license for the vehicle as well as any additional training required (e.g. Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) training for HGV drivers, Certificate of competence for handling and transporting livestock etc.)
- The weight limits for vehicles and trailers must not be exceeded
- Speed limits must be obeyed by all drivers and HGV drivers must comply with the driving time restrictions
- Digital tachographs must be processed, the data uploaded and analogue tachographs must be filed safely for inspection

- All vehicles must be serviced and maintained with records kept
- Wheel torque setting must be checked regularly with records kept
- HGV tractors must have formal inspections every 6 weeks and an annual MOT
- Agricultural trailers should have their brakes serviced and inspected at least once a year
- HGV drivers must have an annual medical examination
- Employers must confirm the policies for alcohol and drug misuse including use of prescribed medication. Arrangements must be put in place for lone workers to include mobile phones, route planning, drivers 'phoning in' on arrival at client's sites, regular contact throughout the day etc.
- Drivers must be given rules for the use of mobile phones whilst driving and hands free kits should be provided.

LOADING AND UNLOADING

As loading and unloading are the times when accidents are most likely to happen care should be taken to ensure that the farm and site procedures are as safe as possible. Measures will include:

- Training drivers in the need to wait in a safe place (i.e. not near a working lift truck) or remain in the cab whilst their vehicle is being loaded. If they need to give directions to a lift truck driver then they should stand by their cab
- The wearing of high visibility clothing when working in and around moving vehicles
- Instructing drivers not to load or unload livestock alone – generally you should send a driver and driver's mate



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- Avoiding reversing. If it cannot be avoided then the area should be checked and assistance requested. Great care should be taken as ‘banksman’ are regularly hit by reversing vehicles that they are directing. Agree hand signals in advance and don’t move the vehicle unless the banksman can be seen in the mirrors. Ideally, all vehicles should have reversing cameras fitted
- Instructing drivers to use ‘Safe Stop’ and to ensure that parking brakes are applied on the tractor and trailer. Parking brake warning buzzers can be fitted and drivers must not rely on disconnecting the trailer red lines only
- Training drivers in a safe system for checking loads before unloading and in a safe system for opening curtain sides
- Training drivers in a safe system for sheeting and un-sheeting non-tipping trailers
- Propping vehicle and trailer bodies correctly during any maintenance work
- Providing a system of preventing falls (e.g. harnesses and lanyards, guard rails etc.) if work on trailers or loads cannot be avoided.

MANUAL HANDLING

Try to reduce the risk of manual handling injuries occurring by:

- Storing heavy, raw materials at low level
- Moving items with mechanical handling equipment where possible (lift trucks, sack trucks, pallet trucks etc.)
- Training staff in good lifting technique.

USEFUL LINKS

Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk/logistics/haulage-distribution.htm

Road Haulage Association
www.rha.uk.net

Freight Transport Association
www.fta.co.uk

DVSA
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-standards-agency

The Next Step

The information provided in this guidance is a brief overview of a diverse work activity. This activity may require further assessment and consultancy work completing to ensure statutory compliance.

NFU Mutual Risk Management Services (RMS) can provide additional support in this area using one of its specialist in-house consultants who are based around the UK.

Please contact RMS on 0800 132 029, where we can discuss your requirements further.

Alternatively please contact your local NFU Mutual office to discuss any requirements or visit the NFU Mutual website to view our RMS services www.nfumutual.co.uk



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