HEALTHY WORKPLACES
GOOD FOR YOU. GOOD FOR BUSINESS.
A European campaign on Safe Maintenance

http://osha.europa.eu/en/campaigns/hw2010/

Official campaign partner

Maintenance and work-related road safety

Introduction

Poor vehicle maintenance is an important contributor to road traffic accidents. In road transport operations vehicle maintenance and other work-related road safety issues should be integrated into arrangements for managing health and safety at work, which in turn should be part of everyday business management.

Business benefits

Managing work-related road safety, including vehicle maintenance, has benefits for businesses of all sizes, for example:

- fewer days lost due to accidents;
- fewer vehicles off the road for repair and reduced maintenance costs;
- fewer missed orders;
- less need for investigation and follow-up;
- less pollution and more fuel-efficiency from vehicles.

Company vehicles also transport their public image once out on the road!

Employers' responsibilities

Vehicles used on public highways must comply with road traffic legislation, such as regular examinations for road worthiness. Occupational safety and health (OSH) legislation requires employers to assess risks and take appropriate steps to ensure the health and safety of their employees. This includes driving or riding at work, whether this is in a company car or hired vehicle, or the employees own vehicle. Vehicles are also covered by use of work equipment OSH legislation. Any other equipment used with vehicles should be safe and suitable, for example, equipment used to load and unload vehicles.

Practically this means ensuring that vehicles are:

- fit for the purpose for which they are used;
- designed for safety, by fitting them with safety systems such as electronic braking systems, overload indicators, speed-limiting devices, power steering…;
- maintained in a safe and fit condition.

A well-maintained exhaust system helps compliance with road vehicle legislation, but also helps reduce noise and fume exposure to workers!

Managing vehicle maintenance in practice

Steps to ensure vehicle maintenance should be planned and organised just like any business management activities. There should be clear procedures and arrangements which everyone is informed about and form part of daily work.

Ensuring that vehicles are properly maintained involves:

- identifying a person(s) responsible;
- planning for the servicing of vehicles – service requirements should be defined by the company. The frequency of controls should depend on the conditions under which vehicles are used;
- monitoring the status of vehicles on a daily basis;
- vehicle users reporting any problems during use – according to established procedures (e.g. report form, intervention request form);
- further involving staff by getting them to do daily and weekly vehicle checks - Basic checks before any journey include: are windows and mirrors clean? Are tyres, brakes, steering and lights in good condition?;
- instructing and training staff on maintenance arrangements and specific procedures for their vehicles;
- insisting that vehicles owned by drivers themselves are also properly maintained and regularly serviced.

Daily and weekly vehicle checks by drivers

Carrying out vehicle checks should be part of the daily driving routine. Before drivers even step into their vehicles there are certain checks they should be making to ensure they are not putting themselves and others at unnecessary risk.

Using the word 'POWER' is one way of remembering some of the important checks you should carry out. This stands for Petrol, Oil, Windows, Electrics and Rubber. These are just some of the main

checks you should be carrying out regularly – others include brakes, steering, wipers and washers. See the example of a check list:

Assessment of pre-drive vehicle circle check		
Out of vehicle circle check	**good**	**requires attention - notes**
fuel/oil leaks		
engine oil, fuel and water		
battery		
tyres for pressure damage and wheel fixings		
spray suppression		
steering		
payload correct and secure		
lights and indicators		
reflectors and number plates		
brakes and hoses		
coupling		
vehicle bodywork and damage		
In-vehicle circle check	**good**	**requires attention - notes**
brake pressure, warning and instruments		
windscreen wipers and washers		
horn		
mirrors		
tachograph working		
door and seat		
notes and reports all vehicle defects		

Contracting owner-drivers or subcontracting transport activities
If you contract owner-drivers or subcontract your transport activities to another company you can still specify standards for vehicle maintenance.

What else? Other maintenance considerations
In driving and transportation work, maintenance needs are not just limited to vehicle road-worthiness. Depending on the business activity, other areas for maintenance may include:

- cab safety features, temperature control system, seatbelts, head restraints, seat adjustment mechanisms etc;
- safety of the load bed, steps etc.;
- loading and unloading equipment, load restraint equipment, fall arrest equipment;
- lighting in depots, yard surfaces even and free from potholes;
- anti-slip surfaces or footwear, other personal protective equipment;
- liaison with sites where goods are collected and delivered – drivers can assist by giving them a checklist to complete for new sites.

Road maintenance and journey planning
While road maintenance is not the transporters' responsibility, it should be taken into account:

- use web-based services to get information about possible road works on journey and plan ahead and allow for extra time if a journey is unavoidable;
- keep a safe speed and take extra care when entering and leaving road works;
- take the initiative and support safe road conditions by reporting road maintenance needs to the relevant authority.

Leadership and involvement
Regarding all aspects of health and safety management, employers should seek the views of their employees. Worker consultation is a legal requirement and they have first hand experience of what happens in practice. Commitment should be demonstrated from the top, including through setting a good example, and managers and supervisors should play an active role.

Maintenance in action - examples of good practices
Arla Foods, a Danish dairy company, got managers and drivers to collaborate to develop a scheme to gather and share information about working conditions (design, maintenance, facilities) in the loading areas of the retailers they delivered to. This information has been integrated into the company's IT system so that the information is available to drivers when they print out their daily route. The issues covered include agreements with clients. For drivers it was particularly important that the measures took account of literacy levels and limited time for making deliveries.

John Lewis, a nation-wide retailer in the UK, has developed and implemented work-related driving safety policies and procedures in order to improve overall driving safety, which include maintenance arrangements. While all vehicles must be regularly maintained, the way in which this is carried can vary between different sites. Some choose to conduct vehicle maintenance on-site, whereas some contract it out.

At Coca Cola UK, vehicle inspection and maintenance is an integral part of their fleet safety policy. Measures include car fleet keeping an inventory testing and maintenance history; training and instruction for drivers; checklists for drivers to use. Vehicle inspections and maintenance are conducted by qualified persons, to ensure that manufacturers' recommended service intervals are adhered to and warranties are not invalidated. A maintenance log is kept in each CCE vehicle containing all information relating to that vehicle – the servicing garage must update this upon completion of each service/inspection.

UK Royal Mail designates some workers as coaches (mentors) to drivers. Part of this role is to train drivers to carry out vehicle checks. As part of their own training coaches attend a simple vehicle maintenance course. Vehicle repair procedures include: encouraging early reporting of faults; training drivers to perform agreed minor repairs following an agreed safe system of work and provided they feel capable of doing the task; minor repairs only undertaken in a designated 'safe repair area' that has been risk assessed with the participation of the trade union. Training to carry out the agreed minor repairs is provided by experienced vehicle services technicians who have a 'Trained Trainer' qualification and who have been pre-trained on the agreed course format/content. Agreed vehicle minor repair operations cover: light bulbs; fuses; wiper blades; ISO leads; trailer retaining straps.

SHELL Denmark contracts out its delivery services. Contractors must follow its safety quality system. A proactive approach is taken to help contractors including instruction and learning for the drivers. SHELL also supports contractors in their efforts to get clients to make improvements in unsafe delivery conditions.

Further information

- *Preventing road accidents involving heavy goods vehicle (Facts18),* EU-OSHA.
- *Managing risks to drivers in the road transport sector* (case studies), EU-OSHA, (from May 11th 2011) - see also summary factsheet 98 in all EU languages. http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications
- EU-OSHA road transport resources (from 11 May 2011) http://osha.europa.eu/en/topics/road_transport
- EU-OSHA Safe maintenance campaign, http://osha.europa.eu/en/campaigns/hw2010/
- ETSC (European Transport Safety Council) http://www.etsc.eu/
- European Commission DG MOVE http://ec.europa.eu/transport
- *Causes and circumstances of accidents at work in the EU, chapter 3.6 – occupational road traffic accidents*, European Commission, 2009.