

Preparing for deliveries

Workplace transport site safety information sheet WPT18

This information will be useful to anyone who uses workplace transport or who works where it is used. It will help employers, managers and supervisors to assess their workplace and make improvements. The checklists will help you to prepare your risk assessment.

For most businesses, deliveries are essential and need to be made on a regular basis. If they are not properly controlled then there is a high risk of pedestrian and vehicle accidents. It is important to make the right preparations for deliveries so that they are done safely.

Similar problems affect deliveries and despatching goods. This information sheet concentrates on receiving deliveries and has not considered the despatching of goods.

Common problems

Delivery problems are mainly organisational. Good site management and careful preparation for deliveries can eliminate the majority of problems. Some of the common problems are outlined below:

Delivery drivers who lack the necessary training and information: Driver behaviour is a major cause of accidents. Often drivers lack the appropriate training and information required to make safe deliveries. They can be unfamiliar with particular sites and their delivery procedures. This can lead to drivers making deliveries in dangerous areas or in a dangerous way that puts themselves and others at risk of an accident.

In some cases, drivers who make regular deliveries to a site become complacent and cut corners – they can behave as dangerously as those who are less familiar and lack the necessary training.

Deliveries made in unsafe areas: Deliveries can be made in areas that are poorly defined and where other conflicting pedestrian and vehicle activity is occurring. Areas used for deliveries may be too small and require dangerous reversing movements. In some cases, making deliveries in unsafe areas can generate other problems, eg road surfaces may become damaged and unsafe, increasing the potential for falls, trips and overturning vehicles.



Occasionally, sites can be unsuitable for the deliveries they receive. For example, an older site that was not designed for modern vehicles may be hampered by height, weight and width restrictions.

Lack of co-operation and communication between the receiver and the deliverer: A lack of co-operation and communication between those making the delivery and those receiving it can lead to a number of different problems. Problems generally occur where there is no agreed delivery procedure – deliveries can be made in the wrong way, wrong place and at the wrong time.

While this can happen with regular deliveries it is more likely to occur when special 'one-off' deliveries are made. In such cases delivery procedures and working relationships are less likely to be well developed.

Deliveries that are made on a public road: Deliveries that are made on a public road can put the public at risk. They can block and divert vehicle and pedestrian traffic, eg they may cause a queue of vehicles or encourage pedestrians to walk into the road and around the delivery vehicle.

Deliveries made by unsuitable vehicles: Delivery vehicles can be unsuitable for the site they are delivering to and the load that they are carrying. Vehicles that are unsuitable for the site can break height and weight restrictions by being either too large or long. This can result in damage to the site's road surface or overhead structures, and block access for other site users. It may also restrict the delivery vehicle's movement.

When vehicles are unsuitable for their loads it can cause loads to fall, vehicles to overturn and damage to the load.

Unsupervised deliveries: Deliveries need to be carefully controlled and supervised to make sure they are made safely and that safe working practices are followed. Unsupervised deliveries can lead to procedures not being followed which may lead to:

- conflicting vehicle movements;
- manual handling injuries; and
- buildings, equipment and people being struck by vehicles.

Checklist – what to look out for

- Delivery drivers who lack the necessary training and information to make a safe delivery.
- Deliveries made in unsafe areas.
- Lack of co-operation and communication between the receiver and the deliverer.
- Deliveries made on public roads that put the public at risk.
- Deliveries made by vehicles that are unsuitable for the site they are delivering to.
- Unsupervised deliveries that are unsafe and do not comply with correct procedures.

How can you deal with common problems?

Many common problems can easily be prevented by making careful preparations for delivery to your site and making sure that the correct procedures are followed.

Make sure suitable vehicles are used for delivering to your site: It is important that the correct vehicles are used for the size, type and weight of their loads. For example, hazardous materials need to be in secure protective containers and frozen or chilled food products need to be kept in refrigerated trailers.

Make sure special or unusual deliveries are properly planned and managed: Separate procedures and arrangements should be made for special deliveries.

You should use appropriate traffic management when deliveries are made. In the case of abnormal loads you should also make arrangements with the police. If specialist vehicles or hazardous loads are involved, any special requirements they have should be met.

Provide a site plan to those making the delivery before they enter site: It is important that those making a delivery are familiar with the location and layout of your site so that they can make the delivery safely. Providing them with a site plan and a directions map showing the location of your site and any restrictions on the way to or within the site will enable them to do this. It will also help delivery drivers and dispatchers identify whether the site is easily accessible and to choose the appropriate delivery vehicle.

Employ a site supervisor: Where a number of deliveries are made, you may need to employ a supervisor. A banksman may be needed to direct and supervise any delivery traffic and prevent any conflicting movements. They should wear high-visibility clothing and stand in a safe position.

Designate and mark out specific delivery areas: Areas where deliveries are made and goods are being moved need to be clearly marked and separated from pedestrian and vehicle routes. This will prevent conflicting movements and limit the number of accidents. Delivery areas should also be kept clear of any obstacles. Where possible, use drive-through loading bays to limit the need for reversing.

Deliveries on public roads should only take place where there is no other option. They should have a dedicated risk assessment and appropriate traffic management should be used.

Make sure that everyone making deliveries wears high-visibility clothing: Delivery drivers should wear high-visibility clothing to make sure that they are clearly visible when they leave their vehicles. Banksmen will also need to wear high-visibility clothing so that they are easily seen by drivers.

Produce a clear delivery procedure that is understood by the supplier, carrier and receiver: A clear delivery procedure should be agreed before any delivery is made. The procedure should be known by the right people – those supplying, delivering and receiving the goods. It should include the times deliveries should be made, location they are to be delivered to and details regarding how the delivery will be made.

In many cases a set of agreed procedures need to be documented in a written delivery plan, which should include the following:

- the full delivery address including the postcode;
- a contact name and phone number for the person receiving the delivery;
- site access details;
- information regarding transport restrictions and the route to unloading facilities;
- site-specific hazards and risks;
- personnel arrangements – including roles and responsibilities of drivers and site personnel;
- supervision arrangements;
- equipment arrangements – location of suitable plant and equipment and lifting arrangements; and
- load configuration on the vehicle and unloading sequence.

A delivery plan can also be a practical way of demonstrating that a suitable and sufficient assessment of all risks has been carried out, involving the close co-operation of everyone with legal responsibilities, eg suppliers, customers and, where appropriate, hauliers.

It is important that everyone responsible for implementing the delivery plan is informed of the extent of their duties and responsibilities. They should be adequately instructed, trained and supervised. It is crucial that they co-operate with one another to make sure that the work is carried out safely.

Separate delivery plans should be produced for regular and one-off deliveries. Several different plans may be needed if deliveries are made by rail or water as well as by road.

Checklist

- Provide a site plan to those making the delivery before they enter the site so that they know the layout.
- Produce a clear delivery procedure that is understood by the supplier, carrier and receiver.
- Designate and mark out specific delivery areas that are clearly separate from other vehicle and pedestrian routes.
- Employ a site supervisor to supervise vehicle reversing and turning movements.

Checking your site

Carry out a visual inspection of your delivery areas to check they are suitable and find out whether there are any problems that need to be addressed. Inspect these areas as deliveries take place so you can observe the delivery procedure. Make notes and take photographs of any problems. Consider:

- Are delivery procedures in place and are they being followed?
- Are delivery areas clearly marked?
- Are deliveries well supervised?
- Are other vehicles and pedestrians segregated from the delivery areas?
- Are deliveries made outside the designated areas?
- Is the site appropriate for the deliveries that need to be made?
- Are there any height or weight restrictions?
- Are there any abnormal or hazardous loads?

If a more detailed and wider-reaching guide is required see the *Site inspection: Workplace transport checklist* at www.hse.gov.uk.

If you feel unable to do this yourself, consider paying a professional to inspect your site and to review your procedures.

It is important to monitor the delivery process to identify whether your site has any problems. Consider checking



records of the number of deliveries you have, who the suppliers are, and where and when their deliveries are made. This will help you find out the level of communication and co-operation between the different parties involved.

Alongside monitoring the delivery process you should ask for feedback from the drivers and companies making deliveries. Find out whether they know and use the correct procedures. It may also be helpful to find out whether they think they are given enough information before delivery and whether they feel safe when making deliveries.

Separate risk assessments should be produced for regular deliveries, special deliveries (on an individual basis) and deliveries made on a public road. This will enable you to identify the hazards and associated risks relating to each type of delivery. Carefully examine what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The important things you need to decide are whether a hazard is significant, and whether you have it covered by satisfactory precautions so that the risk is small. You need to check this when you assess the risks. Completing a site inspection may provide a good opportunity to complete a risk assessment.

More information on how to complete a risk assessment is available in *Five steps to risk assessment*.

Checklist

- Carry out a visual inspection of your delivery areas.
- Check records of the number of deliveries you have, who the suppliers are and where their deliveries are made.
- Monitor the delivery process and record any problems.
- Ask for feedback from those making deliveries about the ease and safety of the deliveries they make.
- Talk to your staff about it.
- Consider paying a professional to inspect your site and to review your procedures.
- Produce separate risk assessments for regular and one-off deliveries.

Where to get help

If you have a problem with deliveries on your site, you might be able to fix it yourself. If you are unsure, speak to your health and safety workplace representative or contact HSE for advice. It may be more cost effective to have a professional assess your site and carry out the work, eg get a highway or lining contractor to create a designated delivery area.

You can also get advice by speaking to other similar local businesses – look for examples of good practice. Contact your local trade association or Chamber of Commerce for recommended local suppliers or look in the *Yellow Pages* for listings of the relevant professionals.

What might it cost?

- A site supervisor will require a salary of up to £20 000 per year.
- A professional site inspection will cost around £2000.
- White lining of a delivery area suitable for five vehicles costs around £500.
- Road markings to segregate footways from delivery areas costs around £500–£1000.

(These costs are a guide and may vary significantly for individual sites and circumstances.)

Find out more

Workplace transport safety: An employers' guide HSG136 (Second edition) HSE Books 2005 ISBN 978 0 7176 6154 1

Designing for deliveries Freight Transport Association 1998 ISBN 978 0 902991 66 8

Workplace transport safety: An overview Leaflet INDG199(rev1) HSE Books 2005 (single copy free or priced packs of 5 ISBN 978 0 7176 2821 6) www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg199.pdf

Five steps to risk assessment Leaflet INDG163(rev2) HSE Books 2006 (single copy free or priced packs of 10 ISBN 978 0 7176 6189 3) www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf

Freight Transport Association www.fta.co.uk

Road Haulage Association www.rha.net

Further information

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit www.hse.gov.uk/. You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

This document contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

This document is available at: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wpt18.pdf.

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