

Safely immobilising heavy vehicles and trailers

Checklist tool

Between 2012 and 2016, there were 23 fatalities and other incidents in Queensland where a worker was crushed or hit by a heavy vehicle or trailer because it was not immobilised correctly.

Injury and property damage have also been reported, as well as a number of near misses, as a result of braking systems not being implemented.

Businesses need to ensure that vehicles and trailers are safely immobilised, especially when workers get out of, are near, under or on the truck or trailer.

This checklist focuses on areas where immobilisation failures typically occur:

- Safely immobilising trucks
- Working under trucks and trailers
- Truck and trailer maintenance
- Coupling and de-coupling trailers.

This checklist provides workplaces with an opportunity to address issues, particularly if they check any of the observations or items in the high risk section.

Checklist

Safely immobilising trucks

High risk

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| The driver got out of the truck and did not engage the handbrake. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Repairs done on the truck without the use of any safety equipment to prevent it from moving (e.g. not using wheel chocks or suitable hoist). | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Truck cleaned without proper immobilisation (e.g. not applying the handbrake, not using wheel chocks). | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The driver is not aware of the correct procedure to safely immobilise the truck off-site in case of a breakdown. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Moderate or controlled risk

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| A handbrake alarm has been retro-fitted to the truck to alert the driver. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The driver engaged the handbrake before getting out of the truck. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Driver has received training on how to immobilise the truck during a breakdown (e.g. documentation indicating training conducted on how to immobilise). | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Working under trucks or trailers

High risk

- Workers are under a truck or trailer that is not supported safely (e.g. only using an un-rated jack and/or no axle stands).
- No barriers or restricted access to the vehicle maintenance pit.
- The truck or trailer is worked on while on an unsafe surface (e.g. working on an uneven or sloping surface).
- The ignition key not removed while working under, on or around the truck.

Moderate or controlled risk

- Suitable lifting device for the truck or trailer used with the weight rating clearly displayed (e.g. hydraulic or pneumatic lift).
- Load rated support stands on hard level surfaces placed under the correct support points of the truck or trailer.
- The vehicle pit has restricted access to the area and barriers to prevent falls when not in use.
- Before commencing work on a vehicle or equipment, it is locked and tagged out.

Truck and trailer maintenance

High risk

- Evidence of poor truck and trailer maintenance (e.g. poor condition of the structure and bodywork, lack of maintenance records).
- Driver and workers unaware of what faults to report and who to report them to about their truck and trailer.
- No maintenance scheduled for the truck or trailer.

Moderate or controlled risk

- Visual signs of suitable truck and trailer maintenance (e.g. evidence on the structure and bodywork and maintenance records).
- Drivers and workers know how truck and trailer faults need to be reported (e.g. requests are documented and given to their repairer as soon as possible).
- Mechanical competencies verified (e.g. documentation that prove mechanical qualifications).

Coupling and de-coupling trailers

High risk

- Truck and trailer are parked on an unsafe surface before de-coupling or coupling trailer (e.g. not a hard level surface).
- Worker does not conduct a visual and functional check (e.g. a tug test when coupling the trailer).
- No on-site or hand-held lighting available to use when coupling or de-coupling the trailer.
- Workers coupling or de-coupling the trailer without proper training.
- Workers unable to demonstrate competent trailer coupling and de-coupling.

Moderate or controlled risk

- An alarm system is installed in the truck which notifies the worker if the trailer has not been coupled correctly.
- A functional check conducted to confirm that the trailer is coupled (e.g. visual check and tug test to see if wheel jaws are engaged while trailer brakes are on).
- The parking facilities for heavy vehicles are off-street and on a hard and level surface.