



TASMANIAN HEAVY VEHICLE

SAFETY CODE

DISCLAIMER

This Safety Code is not intended to conflict with or to replace any existing legislation or guidance notes issued by regulatory bodies and should not be used or relied on as a legal document.

Although the information contained in this document is believed to be correct at the time of publication and every attempt will be made to keep the Code under review and amendments issued from time to time as circumstances dictate, it remains the responsibility of all within the transport industry to be conversant with existing law.

Accordingly, the Crown in the right of the State of Tasmania to the extent lawful, excludes all liability for loss (whether arising under contract, tort, statute or otherwise) arising from the contents of this document or from its use. To the extent that liability cannot be excluded, it is reduced to the full extent lawful at law. Without limiting the foregoing, people using this document should apply their own skill and judgment when using the information contained in this document.

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1 BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In 2005, the Minister for Infrastructure formed the Heavy Truck Safety Advisory Council to demonstrate leadership in the transport industry on safety initiatives and provide high-level advice to the Minister on strategies to improve heavy vehicle safety in Tasmania. The Council's responsibilities include actively promoting the introduction of safety and business systems that improve heavy vehicle safety on Tasmanian roads.

The Heavy Truck Safety Advisory Council considered a range of information relating to heavy vehicle safety. Crash data statistics for Tasmania show that there is no 'crisis situation' regarding the number of heavy vehicle crashes. It is clear, however, from the data that improvements can be made to reduce the incidence of heavy vehicle crashes.

In 2006, the Heavy Truck Safety Advisory Council made a recommendation to the Minister that a Heavy Vehicle Safety Code be implemented across the heavy vehicle industry. Since that time, the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) has been developing this Safety Code (called the Code) in collaboration with industry, to bring together information that identifies best practice that will ensure safe and effective heavy vehicle operations.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE CODE

This Code provides guidance on '*what*' systems or frameworks can be put in place to improve business processes which impact on road safety in the heavy vehicle industry. The content provides information on issues that all heavy vehicle operators and drivers should consider to ensure operational best practice. The Code is not intended to tell operators '*how*' to implement any of the systems or processes mentioned, however reference material to enable practical implementation is included in each section. Industry wide adoption of this Code will result in reduced heavy vehicle crashes.

1.3 BENEFITS OF THE CODE

Using this Code will provide several benefits including:

- reduced number of heavy vehicle crashes;
- pro-actively improving heavy vehicle safety;
- increased industry awareness of heavy vehicle safety issues;
- minimising the risk of breaching transport laws;
- enhanced Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) practices;
- potential to increase productivity;
- mitigation of risks from civil claims;
- enhanced business reputation; and
- lower fuel costs through travel planning and more efficient driving.

1.4 WHO SHOULD USE THE CODE?

All Tasmanian heavy vehicle operators and drivers using vehicles on Tasmanian roads included in the driver licence categories Heavy Rigid, Heavy Combination or Multi -

Combination **should** comply with the Code. However, the benefits of improved business systems and safety can be realised by any driver or operator in the heavy vehicle industry.

1.5 STATUS OF THE CODE

Adoption of the Code is voluntary at this stage, however it has been developed to align with Compliance and Enforcement legislation that will be implemented in Tasmania as detailed in section 1.8.

1.6 TERMINOLOGY USED IN THE CODE

A glossary of terms is included at the back of the Code. The glossary provides an explanation of words used to highlight the importance of the information contained in this document. Readers are encouraged to read the glossary before reading the Code. Throughout the remainder of this document the terms '**must**', '**should**', '**obligation**', '**requirement**' and '**recommends**' have been italicised and bolded for emphasis.

1.7 THE STRUCTURE OF THE CODE

This Code has been developed in two parts.

Part A includes those issues that are current law and those that will be covered by the Compliance and Enforcement legislation when it is implemented in Tasmania.

Part B addresses measures that operators and drivers **should** comply with to improve heavy vehicle safety.

1.8 COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION

The Tasmanian Government is working toward implementing the National Model Compliance and Enforcement legislation. Industry will be kept informed about the timing of implementation and their **obligations** in relation to the legislation.

The Compliance and Enforcement legislation will make all on and off road parties responsible for compliance with road transport laws. Chain of Responsibility provisions will impose **obligations** on all parties in the transport chain, and all individuals in the corporate chain of command to either take reasonable steps to prevent a contravention of the road transport laws, or not to encourage or coerce others to contravene those laws.

The Compliance and Enforcement legislation is a nationally consistent model, which will provide increased enforcement powers to authorised officers and place responsibilities on all parties in the heavy vehicle transport chain of responsibility.

1.9 MAINTAINING THE CURRENCY OF INFORMATION IN THE CODE

The Heavy Truck Safety Advisory Council will establish a mechanism to ensure the information contained in the Code is kept up to date and reviewed periodically. You are encouraged to comment on the contents of the Code and make suggestions by contacting the Manager Vehicle Operations Branch within DIER on (03) 6233 5390 or emailing vehicle.operations@dier.tas.gov.au.

1.10 ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES

This Code contains many links to web addresses providing more detailed information on the various issues presented. Individuals who do not have online access can attend any of the 66 Online Access Centres located throughout Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Communities Online network is administered by the Department of Education through the State Library's - Tasmanian Communities Online Centre Support Unit.

Contact details for the Centre Support Unit include:

Location: Adult Education 32-36 Church Street Hobart Tasmania 7000
Postal address: GPO Box 874 HOBART TAS 7001
Telephone: (03) 6233 2802
Facsimile: (03) 6233 4955
Email: tco@education.tas.gov.au
Website: www.tco.asn.au

2 PART A

2.1 OPERATOR AND DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1.1 Introduction

Employers and employees have **obligations** to maintain a safe workplace under OH&S legislation as set out under the *Workplace Health & Safety Act 1995*.

A workplace means any premise or place **(including a vehicle)** where any employee, contractor or self-employed person is or was employed or engaged in industry.

Occupational health and safety requires everyone in the workplace to be aware of potential hazards and to take steps to prevent workplace accidents, injuries and illness. Responsibilities under the OH&S legislation are broad and include employers, employees and subcontractors.

More detailed information about OH&S **obligations** can be found in:

- Workplace Standards Tasmania 2006, *Welcome to the workplace employers – A health & safety guide for employers of new workers*, which can be viewed at the following web address:
<[Welcome to the workplace: a guide for employers](#)>.
- *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*; which can be viewed at the following web address:
<http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=13%2B%2B1995%2BAT%40EN%2B20080409150000;hison=;prompt=;rec=;term=>>.
- *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998* which can be viewed at the following web address:
<http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=%2B152%2B1998%2BAT%40EN%2B20080409150000;hison=;prompt=;rec=;term=>>.

2.1.2 What are the responsibilities for each party?

2.1.2.1 Responsibilities of an operator

An operator **must** provide drivers and other employees with:

- a safe workplace;
- safe systems of work;
- safe equipment;
- information about the work tasks the driver undertakes so they understand the hazards they may be exposed to;
- training so the driver is competent to safely perform transport tasks (this may include training in vehicle types not previously driven, loads not previously carried or terrain not previously travelled etc); and
- periodic supervision to make sure duties are being performed safely and correctly.

An operator **must** also ensure that:

- procedures are being followed to reduce the risk of injury or illness; and
- all staff (including drivers) understand their **obligations** in regard to OH&S.

2.1.2.2 Responsibilities of drivers and other employees

Drivers and other employees **must**:

- correctly follow all policies and procedures for doing the job;
- use any equipment and plant safely and correctly;
- not put themselves, co-workers or the public at risk;
- report accidents or near misses;
- report any hazards in the workplace;
- Drivers and other employees **must** not consume alcohol or drugs in the workplace. Drivers **must** not, and other employees **should** not, have alcohol or illicit drugs in their bodies. Further information on alcohol and drugs in the workplace can be found at the following web address:
<http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=%2B152%2B1998%2BAT%40EN%2B20081114100000;histon=;prompt=;rec=;term=>.
- maintain their own health; and
- work with the operator to improve health and safety in the workplace.

2.2 STATE BASED HEAVY VEHICLE SAFETY SCHEMES

In Tasmania, there are three types of safety initiatives -

- Fatigue Management;
- Mass Management; and
- Maintenance Management.

The fatigue management scheme is included in Part A because it is a legislated **requirement**.

The Mass Management accreditation scheme is also included in Part A because those operators wanting to access and retain higher mass limits **must** comply with the **requirements** of the scheme.

The State based Maintenance Management initiative is detailed in Part B (section 3.2.2).

2.2.1 Fatigue Management

2.2.1.1 What is it?

In Tasmania, the system used to manage fatigue for heavy vehicle drivers is called the Driving Hours Record. From 1 August 2004 it became compulsory for drivers of heavy trucks/combinations over 12 tonne GVM, or forming part of a combination where the GVM of the vehicles in the combination exceeds in the aggregate 12 tonnes, to complete and carry a Driving Hours Record. Operators and drivers **must** be familiar with and adhere to the Driving Hours Record **requirements**. DIER has developed fatigue management information explaining:

- the limitation on the number of hours that drivers can work or drive;
- the **requirement** to take regular breaks;
- the **obligation** to complete the relevant sections of the Driving Hours Record; and
- conditions **required** for exemption from the Driving Hours Record.

This information can be found at the following web address:

<http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/safety/driver_fatigue_-_heavy_vehicle_industry2>.

The *Vehicle and Traffic (Vehicle Operations) Regulations 2001* specify the technical and operational **requirements** for all vehicles used on public streets and include **requirements** relating to the Driving Hours Record.

These regulations can be found at the following web address:

<http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=ALL;doc_id=%2B168%2B2001%2BAT%40EN%2B20040804090000;hison=;prompt=;rec=;term=vehicle%20operations%20regulations%202001>.

The paragraphs above concern the current legislative **requirements** for fatigue management in Tasmania. These **requirements** will change when Compliance and Enforcement legislation is implemented in Tasmania. Industry will be kept informed about the timing and impact of implementing the Compliance and Enforcement legislation and the Code will be updated accordingly.

2.2.1.2 Naps and Roadside rest areas

Napping has been identified as an effective mechanism to help drivers manage fatigue in the short term and maintain alertness. It is not intended as a substitute for a good long sleep. If the driver has acquired enough sleep beforehand, napping can be used to reduce fatigue during the body clock's low points and during long familiar driving hauls.

A map detailing the Designated Heavy Vehicle Parking Areas in Tasmania is located at the following web address: <www.transport.tas.gov.au/standards>.

2.2.1.3 Fatigue Management Benefits

The benefits of Fatigue Management include:

- improved fatigue management practices;
- compliance with OH&S legislation;
- a reduction in prosecutions associated with instances of non-compliance with the 'Driving Hours Record'; and
- improved road safety.

2.2.1.4 Fatigue Management Reference Material

To manage fatigue effectively, operators and drivers **should** understand the causes of fatigue and recognise the symptoms of fatigue. Comprehensive information on fatigue management can be obtained from the following publications:

- Northern Territory Transport Group 1998, *Road transport fatigue management*, which can be viewed at <<http://www.nt.gov.au/transport/safety/road/fatigue/package/introduction.shtml>>.
- National Transport Commission (NTC) Australia 2004, *Heavy vehicle industry driver fatigue code of practice*, revised draft, which can be viewed at <<http://www.ntc.gov.au/ViewPage.aspx?page=A02313404400250020>>.
- National Transport Commission (NTC) Australia 2007, *Guidelines for using napping to prevent commercial vehicle driver fatigue driver*, which can be viewed at <<http://www.ntc.gov.au/ViewPage.aspx?page=A02315400400180020>>.

2.2.2 State Based - Mass Management Accreditation

2.2.2.1 What is it?

Mass Management Accreditation is a scheme which allows accredited operators using certain vehicles travelling on specific parts of the road network to travel in excess of the legislated maximum masses. Mass Management Accreditation is an operator-based

scheme under which those operators wanting to access higher mass limits, **must** demonstrate that they meet the seven standards identified in the accreditation process.

On 1st December 2002, Mass Management Accreditation became a mandatory **requirement** for operators of all vehicles to operate at higher mass limits.

The Mass Management Accreditation Guidelines [National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Schemes (NHVAS) in Tasmania] manual details the allowable masses, the standards and accreditation process. Copies of the manual can be obtained by contacting DIER's Vehicle Operations Branch on (03) 6233 5347. Section 2.3 of this Code covers the mass management route network specific to Tasmania.

2.2.2.2 Mass Management Benefits

The benefits of implementing a mass accreditation system include:

- access to the higher mass limits route networks and associated productivity gains;
- elimination or reduction in the number of overweight loads causing excessive wear and tear on roads and vehicles; and
- reduction in the instances where operators and drivers may be fined for non-compliance with transport laws or regulations.

2.3 MASS & DIMENSIONS

There is a range of mass and dimension limits outlining **requirements** for the legal operation of all types of vehicles in Tasmania. This section of the Code identifies components of particular importance to the heavy vehicle industry and provides links to the relevant legislative and regulatory information.

Operators and drivers **must** make themselves aware of the legislative and regulatory **requirements** and limitations for any given transport task. Failure to do so increases the risk of prosecution for non-compliance, in addition to creating unsafe work conditions.

Heavy vehicle operators and drivers **should** familiarise themselves with the following components of the legislative and regulatory **requirements** for transport tasks in Tasmania:

- gazetted exemptions;
- permits;
- standard mass limits;
- higher mass limits;
- route network for vehicles fitted with road friendly suspension;
- high productivity routes;
- over size, over mass **requirements**;
- over height vehicles; and
- escort and pilot vehicles.

Details explaining each of these components can be found in the following references:

- *The Vehicle and Traffic (Vehicle Operations) Regulations 2001* specify the technical and operational **requirements** for all vehicles used on public streets in Tasmania and can be viewed at the following web address:
<http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=ALL;doc_id=%2B168%2B2001%2BAT%40EN%2B20040804090000;hison=;prompt=;rec=:term=vehicle%20operations%20regulations%202001>.
- *The Vehicle and Traffic (Vehicle Operations) Notice 2006*, (known as the Gazette Notice) provides specific exemptions from the regulatory mass and dimension

limits for certain vehicles or combinations and provides conditions under which an exemption is granted.

- The Gazette Notices can be viewed at the following web address:
<[http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=%2B81%2B2006%2BAT%40EN%2B20060818140000;hison=;prompt=;rec=;term](http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=%2B81%2B2006%2BAT%40EN%2B20060818140000;hison=;prompt=;rec=;term=)>.
- *Vehicle and Traffic (Vehicle Standards) Regulations 2001*, specify the minimum standards **required** for vehicles operating on public streets in Tasmania and can be viewed at the following web address:
<[http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=%2B117%2B2001%2BGS1%2FEN%2B20040804000000;hison=;prompt=;rec=0;term](http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=%2B117%2B2001%2BGS1%2FEN%2B20040804000000;hison=;prompt=;rec=0;term=)>.

Other sources of information include:

- An information bulletin “Higher Mass Limits for Vehicles Fitted with Road Friendly Suspension” detailing conditions for use of vehicles with road-friendly suspension can be obtained by contacting the Permits Officer at DIER on (03) 6233 5347.
- An information bulletin “Over Dimension and Over Mass Vehicles & Loads” which details the **requirements** for transporting indivisible oversize and/or over mass loads can be found at the following web address:
<http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/standards/information_bulletins>.
- An information bulletin “General Access Mass Dimension” which details the mass and dimension limits for vehicles or combinations operating without exemption on public streets can be viewed at the following web address:
<http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/standards/information_bulletins>.
- The “NTC Load Restraint Guide” can be viewed at the following web address:
<<http://www.ntc.gov.au/viewPage.aspx?page=A022085093006200200>>.

Any other enquiries about applications for a permit can be directed to the Permits Officer at DIER by phoning (03) 6233 5347.

2.4 ROADWORTHINESS

Failure to undertake regular vehicle maintenance is dangerous. Apart from risking prosecution for non-compliance with the *Vehicle and Traffic (Vehicle Standards) Regulations 2001*, there is increased potential for crashes. The *Vehicle and Traffic (Vehicle Standards) Regulations 2001* can be viewed at the following web address:
<[http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=%2B117%2B2001%2BGS1%2FEN%2B20040804000000;hison=;prompt=;rec=0;term](http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=%2B117%2B2001%2BGS1%2FEN%2B20040804000000;hison=;prompt=;rec=0;term=)>.

Operators **must** ensure that any heavy vehicle they operate is roadworthy. Section 3.2.2 of this document discusses some of the mechanisms or systems that could be used to ensure roadworthiness is achieved.

Vehicles detected as un-roadworthy will be given a defect notice and operators and / or drivers can be issued with a Traffic Infringement Notice. Detailed information about vehicle defect notices and associated management processes is included in the *Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources 2007 Defect Notices* and can be viewed at the following web address:
<http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/standards/defect_notices>.

2.5 LOAD RESTRAINT

Every year in Tasmania heavy vehicles crash due to loads being improperly secured and inappropriately placed. This can lead to movement causing instability in the vehicle when braking and cornering, resulting in the vehicle crashing. Alternatively, loads can come

free of the vehicle altogether resulting in hazards for other road users. Any load-carrying vehicle **must** be loaded and driven in a way that prevents danger to any person, or damage to any property.

Some loads are liable to move within the vehicle during the journey. Extra care needs to be taken if a vehicle is carrying:

- livestock;
- hung meat carcasses; and
- bulk liquids in tanks.

More detailed information on load restraint is provided in the documents:

- National Transport Commission (NTC) Australia 2004, Load Restraint Guide, 2nd edition and can be viewed at the following web address:
<<http://www.ntc.gov.au/FileView.aspx?page=A02306404400500020/>>.
- The Forest Safety Code (Tasmania) can be viewed at the following web address:
<http://www.wst.tas.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/81873/Forest_Safety_Code_2007.pdf>.

Compliance with load restraint guidelines will ensure a safer and more efficient transport activity, in addition to avoiding any penalties that may arise as a result of non-compliance with the loading **requirements**. Legal **requirements** relating to load restraints in Tasmania are detailed in the *Vehicle and Traffic (Vehicle Operations) Regulations 2001* Regulation 26 - Standard for Security of Loads which refer to the Load Restraint Guide, and can be viewed at the following web address:

<http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=all;doc_id=%2B168%2B2001%2BAT%40EN%2B20081013000000;histon=;prompt=;rec=;term=vehicle%20and%20traffic%20vehicle%20operations>.

2.6 OTHER SAFETY ISSUES

There are a number of heavy vehicle safety aspects that are influenced by driver behaviour. This section identifies these and associated legal **requirements**, in addition to providing links to reference materials. Both operators and drivers are **obligated** to ensure that these safety issues are understood and adhered to. In order to implement and maintain safe operational practices it is **recommended** that information about these safety issues be:

- included in induction material provided to new drivers; and
- incorporated into refresher training / briefing sessions for experienced drivers.

2.6.1 Road Rules

It is a legal **requirement** for all drivers to comply with Tasmanian road rules. The *Traffic (Road Rules) Regulations 1999* set out relevant legal **requirements** and can be viewed at the following web address:

<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/tas/consol_reg/trr1999290/>.

DIER has developed the Tasmanian Road Rules Handbook 2006 which can be viewed at the following web address:

<http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/licence_information_folder/tasmanian_road_rules_-_q_and_.>.

2.6.2 Drugs and Driving

2.6.2.1 Introduction

It is **recommended** that each workplace **should** have relevant drug and alcohol information and education available for all employees. The types of information that **should** be covered include:

- a Drug and Alcohol Policy;
- information about how long it takes the body to rid itself of alcohol or drugs;
- details of the steps, procedures and **obligations** of management and employees relating to drugs and alcohol in the workplace; and
- details about any support schemes established to assist employees.

The information **should** be publicised throughout the workplace so all staff are familiar with the **requirements**.

The *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998* address the issues of alcohol and drugs, both medicinal and illicit, in the workplace. The regulations can be found at the following web address:

http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=%2B152%2B1998%2BAT%40EN%2B20080409150000;hison=;prompt=;rec=;term=>.

2.6.2.2 Illicit Drugs and Driving

Research has established that the main reason why heavy vehicle drivers take drugs is to keep alert. There are, however, no drugs that overcome tiredness / fatigue. Drugs may make a person stay awake longer, but they will affect alertness and reaction time. Eventually the sleep debt that has been accrued will catch up with the driver.

2.6.2.3 Random Roadside Drug Testing

Tasmania Police have the power to conduct:

- breath tests;
- random roadside saliva tests;
- trace particle detection tests (steering wheel swab tests); and
- blood tests to detect the presence of illicit drugs.

Drugs that can be tested for include:

- Speed;
- Methaqualone (sedative);
- Ecstasy;
- Cocaine;
- Heroin;
- Morphine;
- Amphetamine;
- Cannabis;
- LSD;and
- GBH.

2.6.2.4 Alcohol and Driving

The prescribed alcohol limit for a heavy vehicle driver is 0.00 (no blood alcohol content at all). Operators and drivers **should** make themselves familiar with the definitions of 'standard drinks' and be sure to understand how long it takes for alcohol to leave the

body. Detailed definitions and important information on drink driving are provided in the “*Tasmanian Road Rules Handbook*” and can be viewed at the following web address: http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/pdf/licence_information/tasmanian_road_rules/part_3_-_road_safety.pdf.

Any driver found guilty of drink or drug driving, or refusing to submit to a breathalyser or drug test can expect to lose their authority to drive.

2.6.2.5 Prescription Drugs

All drugs, including prescription drugs, will affect individuals differently. Drivers **should** ensure that they comply with the instructions provided by medical practitioners when taking prescription drugs.

It is important to ensure that medical practitioners are aware of the industry in which patients work. Drivers seeking medical advice **should** provide information about their role and working conditions in the heavy vehicle industry to medical practitioners. Jobs involving longer working hours, shift work, repetitive or monotonous activities (which are common in the heavy vehicle industry), may influence the type of prescription a medical practitioner selects.

2.6.2.6 Reference Materials for Drugs and Driving

More detailed information on these safety issues is provided in the:

- Road Traffic Authority *Drugs and Heavy Vehicle Drivers*, which can be viewed at the following web address: http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadsafety/downloads/2007_01_drugs_hvdrivers_dl1.html?hvlid=drugtesting.
- Western Australia Office of Road Safety 2007, *Drugs and driving don't mix*, which can be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.officeofroadsafety.wa.gov.au/index.cfm?event=topicsDrugDriving>.
- Transport Industry Safety Group (TISG) 2006, *A guide to occupational health and safety – transport industry*, 5th ed, which can be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.vta.com.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=HREcpAzQuDM%3d&tabid=1078&mid=2891>.
- *Tasmanian Road Safety (Alcohol and Drugs) Act 1970*, which can be viewed at the following web address: http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=77%2B%2B1970%2BAT%40EN%2B20080409150000;hison=;prompt=;rec=;term=>.

3 PART B

3.1 DRIVER RECRUITMENT, INDUCTION, EDUCATION & TRAINING

3.1.1 Introduction

Recruiting the best driver for an operator's business is an important task, as drivers contribute to the financial viability, safe, efficient operation and reputation of the business.

For licensing purposes, heavy vehicle drivers are **required** to demonstrate to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles that they are competent to drive a class of vehicle, that they can couple and uncouple a combination and conduct a safety check for a specific licence class (this is a minimum standard). However, as the licensing process does not take into account the different characteristics of different types of loads or different types of vehicles within a licence class, training is important.

Section 9 of the *Workplace, Health and Safety Act 1995*, details the duties of employers to ensure so far as reasonably practicable that their employees are safe from injury and risks to health while at work. This includes providing any information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure that each employee is safe. Induction training is a **must** to ensure that drivers have the required knowledge and skills to operate in accordance with best safety practices.

Section 9 of the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*; can be viewed at the following web address by clicking on Section 9 under Table of Contents which appears on the left hand side of the page:

[http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=13%2B%2B1995%2BAT%40EN%2B20080409150000;histon=;prompt=;rec=;term=>](http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=13%2B%2B1995%2BAT%40EN%2B20080409150000;histon=;prompt=;rec=;term=)

As part of the driver induction process, operators **should** ensure that drivers are aware of all legal **requirements** for driving heavy vehicles on Tasmanian roads. This is in addition to understanding and working in accordance with all of the organisation's policies. Having drivers 'sign off' acknowledging they have been shown and understand all company policies and they agree to operate accordingly, is one way of ensuring this. The 'sign off' could include, but not be limited to, getting the driver's agreement to comply with:

- all road rules such as wearing a seatbelt;
- all vehicle standards;
- all other legal **requirements**;
- any OH&S procedures specific to the company;
- any compliments and complaints procedures specific to the company;
- any **requirements** regarding confidentiality of information (e.g. contractual costs);
- any procedures the company uses to support employees;
- any **obligations** the company negotiates as a condition of service; and
- any other issues the company wants to ensure drivers comply with.

3.1.1.1 Driver Recruitment

Operators **should** put in place a number of conditions of employment to ensure they employ appropriately skilled and qualified drivers. These conditions may include:

- gaining an understanding of the driver's breadth of experience in terms of vehicles previously driven, load types and operating environment etc;
- checking if there are any skill gaps in the experiences the driver has and the types of vehicles the driver will be using if employed by the company;

- conducting a pre-employment drive or similar activity relating to specific type of vehicle/s and the transport task the driver is likely to be involved in;
- requiring potential employees to provide a current national police record of their driving history, a criminal history check and current licence details;
- checking that drivers have the correct licence for the type of vehicle they will be driving;
- asking potential new drivers about their attitude to road safety and general safety issues;
- asking drivers about their driving history in regard to crashes;
- checking with referees provided by drivers; and
- checking on a driver's medical fitness to drive at the nationally required commercial level requiring a medical check.

3.1.2 Education and Training

Regular education and training **should** be provided to drivers to ensure that their knowledge and skills remain current. This also demonstrates an interest in the welfare and safety of drivers.

Operators **should** conduct periodic appraisal drives with drivers when the type of vehicle or combination being used changes, the type of load changes or the type of operating conditions change.

A list of heavy vehicle training providers is detailed in the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources *Heavy Vehicles Driver Licence and Guidelines*, which can be viewed at the following web address:

<http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/pdf/licence_information/heavy_vehicle_guidelines.pdf>.

One example of the type of training that **should** be included in induction training and reviewed periodically is information about driving to suit the weather conditions, as detailed below.

The safe speed for a vehicle and its load may be much lower than the regulated speed limit, depending on a number of factors. Drivers **should** be constantly assessing and responding to the changing driving conditions. Some of the numerous aspects that drivers **should** be considering include:

- ensuring there is a safe travelling distance between vehicles (also known as a crash avoidance space or the general 4 second rule);
- travelling at a speed that ensures driver visibility;
- curve speed selection (assessing the correct speed for the angle of the curve, the camber of the road etc);
- adjusting driving to suit the weather conditions;
- travelling at a speed that ensures vehicle stability;
- monitoring the load ensuring that it has not shifted; and
- reducing speed to ensure moving loads are more stable.

More detailed information on these safety issues is provided in the:

- Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) 2007, *Heavy vehicle driver handbook*, which can be viewed at the following web address:
<http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/licensing/downloads/heavyvehiclehandbook_dl1.html?hvid=4>.

- Victorian Transport Association (2006), *Speeding & speeding safety guide*, which can be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.vta.com.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=9jgNh80KcRM%3d&tabid=1078&mid=2891>.

3.1.3 Load-Specific Training

Driving a heavy vehicle loaded with potatoes is very different to transporting livestock where animals move, or driving a tanker loaded with liquid. Operators **should** provide training in handling specific load types to drivers. The handling characteristics of vehicles with different load types (e.g. logs or livestock) and different configurations is NOT covered in driver licence training for licensing purposes.

Load distribution, arrangement and restraint **should** be taught specific to a commodity, as incorrect load distribution can be detrimental to the vehicle's handling, braking and stability. A load that is not properly restrained can shift and make vehicles less stable, which increases the likelihood of the vehicle overturning or losing its load. Apart from the significant safety aspects and lost productivity, any load loss could disrupt traffic, damage property (including the vehicle) or life, potentially be costly to clean up and affect the reputation of the company.

More detailed information is provided in the:

- National Transport Commission (NTC) Australia 2004, Load Restraint Guide, 2nd edition which can be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.ntc.gov.au/FileView.aspx?page=A02306404400500020>.
- The Forest Safety Code (Tasmania) 2007 which can be viewed at the following web address: http://www.wst.tas.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/81873/Forest_Safety_Code_2007.pdf.

There are commercial service providers and / or Registered Training Organisations which can supply Load Security training courses. Operators are encouraged to pursue this type of training for drivers and other employees.

Information on Registered Training Organisations can be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.ntis.gov.au>.

3.2 MONITORED / ACCREDITED HEAVY VEHICLE SAFETY SCHEMES

There are a number of safety schemes that can be implemented in the heavy vehicle industry. Some schemes are accredited or have their framework established at the National level; some are accredited and administered at a State and Territory level. Irrespective of the accreditation status, operators are encouraged to adopt the safety improvement initiatives discussed below. In Tasmania, there are three types of safety initiatives:

- Fatigue Management;
- Mass Management; and
- Maintenance Management.

Fatigue Management and Mass Management have been covered in Part A and Maintenance Management is covered in more detail in the next section.

3.2.1 National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Schemes (NHVAS)

3.2.1.1 What is it?

The National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme (NHVAS) is an initiative of the National Transport Commission (NTC), under the direction of State and National Transport Ministers.

The aim of the scheme is to promote increased levels of safety and quality in goods vehicle operations, and/or increased self-compliance.

The NHVAS is currently administered through the State road and transport authorities using a common set of standards, audit procedures and business rules (This only applies to the States that have implemented the various components of the scheme).

The NHVAS consists of modules that operate independently of each other. These modules are:

- Mass Management Accreditation;
- Maintenance Management Accreditation; and
- Fatigue Management Accreditation.

There are likely to be other modules added to this in the future.

Further information on the NHVAS can be found at the following web addresses:

<<http://www.ntc.gov.au/ViewPage.aspx?page=A023014064000800200>>.

<<http://www.ntc.gov.au/ViewPage.aspx?page=A02314407400120020>>.

The safety benefits of heavy vehicle accreditation schemes are outlined in the following publication:

- Austroads 2008, *Analysis of the Safety Benefits of Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Schemes*, which can be accessed by visiting the site listed, and becoming a registered user:
<<http://www.onlinepublications.austroads.com.au/script/Details.asp?DocN=AUSTROADS29334>>.

3.2.2 State Based - Maintenance Management

3.2.2.1 Introduction

All vehicles travelling on Tasmanian roads, **must** be maintained to the standards detailed in the *Vehicle and Traffic (Vehicle Standards) Regulations 2001*, which can be viewed at the following web address:

<http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=%2B117%2B2001%2BGS1%2BFEN%2B20040804000000;histon=;prompt=;rec=0;term=>.

Compliance with these standards can be achieved if a well planned and coordinated maintenance management approach is implemented. While there is no Tasmanian legal **requirement** for heavy vehicle operators to have Maintenance Management Accreditation, it is **recommended** that some form of Maintenance Management System be implemented. Such systems will assist operators to meet their **obligation** to provide a safe workplace where the vehicle is the workplace.

A Maintenance Management System provides clear procedures to ensure vehicles are correctly maintained and kept in a safe and roadworthy condition. Maintenance Management Systems generally include components such as:

- the **requirement** to conduct a daily vehicle check and completion of check lists;
- fault reporting, recording and fault repair;
- maintenance schedules and associated maintenance records;
- details of who is responsible for maintenance tasks; and
- maintenance training and education.

There are commercial providers of Maintenance Management Systems, however operators **should** only use providers who comply with the NHVAS maintenance standards.

3.2.2.2 Pre-Departure Checks

Operators **should** ensure that drivers conduct pre-departure checks before commencing any transport task. The purpose of the check is to determine if the vehicle or combination has any obvious defects; is compliant with the mass and dimension limits; that all couplings and connectors are appropriately connected, and the load is positioned and secured in accordance with the requirements of the Load Restraint Guide.

Operators should devise pre-departure checklists to assist their drivers in conducting pre-departure checks. Inspections **should** include the following road safety checks:

- All fluid levels including fuel;
- The condition of all drive belts and hoses;
- For any fluid or fuel leaks;
- All front, rear and side lighting is clean secure and operational;
- The condition, inflation and security of all tyre and rim assemblies;
- For insecure, damaged or inoperative suspension, steering or brake components;
- The position and security of load;
- Trailer coupling, brake lines and electrical leads are securely coupled (visual and tug test);
- The condition and security of portable warning triangles;
- The currency of registration and permits;
- The condition and operation of seat belt assemblies; and
- The adjustment and security of seats and mirrors;

It is **recommended** that operators use a checklist that takes into account the technical and manufacturer's specifications, the vehicle configuration, the commodity being carried and any specific matters required under company policies.

Operators should also identify an appropriate person who will manage the repairs of any defects. If a minor defect is located the driver **should** report the defect to the appropriate person in the business as soon as practicable. If a major defect is found then the defect **should** be reported immediately and the vehicle stood down from use. More information on developing pre-departure checklists and defects is contained in:

- Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER), 2002, *Heavy vehicle inspection manual*, which can be viewed at the following web address: http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/publications/national_heavy_vehicle_inspection_manual.

3.2.2.3 Maintenance Management Benefits

The benefits to operators can include:

- improved safety;
- productivity and efficiency improvements;
- correct maintenance of vehicles at all times with consequent savings;

- increased vehicle life;
- improved customer confidence because vehicles are well maintained;
- reduced prosecutions relating to vehicle maintenance;
- potential insurance savings; and
- better driver confidence.

3.2.2.4 Maintenance Management Reference materials

- Australian Institute of Criminology 2002, *National road transport compliance and enforcement reforms: on the road to a new national culture of compliance*, which can be viewed at the following web address:
- <<http://search.aic.gov.au/search/search.cgi?collection=aic&form=simple&query=compliance+enforcement+reforms>>.
- National Transport Commission (NTC) Australia 2007, *NHVAS maintenance management accreditation standards*, which can be viewed at the following web address: <<http://www.ntc.gov.au/ViewPage.aspx?page=A02301406400080020>>.
- Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER), 2002, *Heavy vehicle inspection manual*, which can be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/publications/national_heavy_vehicle_inspection_manual>.

3.3 SAFER VEHICLE DESIGN /CONFIGURATION

3.3.1 Purchasing a Safer Vehicle

Operators that acquire safer trucks are investing in the long-term safety of their drivers and other road users. There are a number of safety aspects that **should** be considered when purchasing or leasing a vehicle. Operators and drivers **should** seek further detail on the safety aspects listed below to ensure that the vehicle purchased is well suited to the specific freight task.

Vehicle safety aspects to be considered include:

- Talking with heavy vehicle manufacturers about combinations and configurations that suit the work the vehicle will be used for;
- Operational environment (e.g. hot or cold climate, dusty or wet conditions, sealed or unsealed roads etc);
- Vehicle load carrying capacity (gross vehicle mass and gross combination mass);
- Vehicle layout (e.g. should comply with all legal requirements and should be suited to the type of load, Cab Configuration etc.);
- Vehicle performance, (e.g. appropriate power, torque, gearing, axle ratio, cooling systems, exhaust, fuel efficiency etc appropriate to the freight task);
- Vehicle handling;
- Vehicle suspension configuration;
- Rig and trailer matching and configuration;
- Vehicle maintenance service schedules;
- Integrated seat belt/suspension seat (the type that is built into the seat and is not attached to the body of the cab);
- Airbags (occupant protection system);
- Cab strength (safer workplace);
- Static Rollover Threshold (SRT) (e.g. what will the SRT of a vehicle be once loaded with a specific commodity? A calculator for estimating a vehicle's SRT has been provided at the following website: <www.transport.tas.gov.au/standards>;
- Incorporation of emerging technology;

- Front underrun protection;
- Side and rear underrun protection;
- Emissions standards;
- Braking and stability features such as:
 - Anti-lock Braking System (ABS);
 - Electronic Braking System (EBS);
 - Electronic Stability Control (ESC);
 - Disc or Drum Braking; and
 - Trailer Braking.
- Driving assistance features such as:
 - Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC);
 - Lane Assist;
 - Good Visibility;
 - Comfortable Climate; and
 - Low Noise.

More detailed information on vehicle safety aspects are provided in the:

- Australian Road Transport Suppliers Association 2003, *Buying a safer truck – latest technology*, and can be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.artsa.com.au/library.html>.
- The Australian Road Transport Suppliers Association has several other publications relating to heavy vehicle safety design and configuration and can be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.artsa.com.au/>.
- Victorian Transport Industry Safety Group - "Buying a Safety Heavy Trailer". March 2007, which can be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.vta.com.au/Documents/safe%20trailer%20020407.pdf>.
- The Victorian Government Transport Accident Commission has a number of articles relating to heavy vehicle accident prevention and can be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.tac.vic.gov.au/jsp/corporate/homepage/home.jsp>.
- New South Wales Road and Traffic Authority 2003, Heavy vehicle safety- issues and counter measures, provides a Vehicle Standards section and can be viewed at the following web address http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/heavyvehicles/downloads/3427_rta_heavy_%2044pp.pdf.

3.3.2 Seat Belts

The minimum legal **requirement** for seat belts in heavy vehicles operating on Tasmanian roads is a lap seat belt as detailed in Australian Design Rule 4/01 – 4/03 Seatbelts. However, it is **recommended** that operators and drivers pursue the safer option of an integrated lap/sash seat belt.

Some truck drivers state one of the reasons for not wearing a seat belt is the discomfort factor. Suspension seats are designed to move up and down to improve driver comfort. If the seatbelt is anchored to the truck's side column (B-Pillar) and floor, the up-down movement can cause the belt to lock and tighten across the driver's throat, neck, chest and abdomen causing discomfort.

A seat fitted with an integrated lap-sash seatbelt, (integrated three-point harness), provides better driver safety. This type of seatbelt allows the driver's position to remain constant with the seat and seatbelt and avoids the discomfort described above.

Statistics indicate that there is a far lower compliance rate of seat belt wearing among truck drivers as opposed to car drivers, despite the legislative requirement that all drivers **must** wear a seatbelt if one is fitted.

Research by the Transport Industry Safety Group in 2007 suggests that:

- unbelted heavy vehicle driver loss of life could be reduced by half if heavy vehicle seat belt wearing rates matched the rate achieved by car drivers; and
- seatbelts would have prevented or reduced the injuries suffered in at least 60 per cent of the crashes studied.

Operators have an **obligation** to ensure that their drivers are complying with the legal **requirement** to wear a seatbelt. Drivers detected not wearing a seat belt will be prosecuted.

More detailed information on integrated lap/sash seatbelts is provided in the Vehicle Standard Bulletins, VS-13 Upgrading to seats with Integrated Seat Belts, VSB-6, Section K National Code of Practice Heavy Vehicle Modifications; which can be viewed at the following web address:

<http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/vehicle_regulation/bulletin/index.aspx>.

A list of seat fitters in Tasmania can be found at the following web address:

<http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/standards/seat_fitters>.

3.4 VEHICLE STABILITY PERFORMANCE

The stability of vehicles can be greatly affected by the way they are loaded. The load distribution **should** be arranged so that its mass and height (which dictate the centre of gravity) are appropriate for the design of the vehicle and type of load being carried.

DIER commissioned Transport Engineering Research New Zealand (TERNZ) to provide a number of reports relating to crash statistics analysis, heavy vehicle stability and Static Rollover Threshold (SRT).

A major focus of the TERNZ reports was to identify specific heavy vehicle performance characteristics that are contributing to crash risk. One vehicle factor that was clearly identified was the SRT. The report **recommends** that improving the static roll threshold of the heavy vehicle fleet in Tasmania will provide a significant reduction in the number of heavy vehicle rollover crashes.

The simplest definition of SRT is a measure of the likelihood of a vehicle rolling over. Vehicles with a low SRT are more likely to rollover than those with a higher SRT. A more detailed explanation of SRT is contained in the TERNZ report which is listed in the following references.

The TERNZ reports also identify a number of methods to achieve improved SRT and include:

- operating with a reduced load mass and /or reduced load height, which effectively reduces the centre of gravity;
- modifying the vehicle so it has sufficient roll stiffness to operate safely at maximum carrying capacity;
- using drop bed trailers instead of flat tray trailers to lower the centre of gravity;
- using smaller tyre sizes to reduce the load height which in turn reduces the centre of gravity; and
- purchasing vehicles that will have a high SRT if loaded appropriately.

A calculator for estimating a vehicle's SRT is provided at the following website: <www.transport.tas.gov.au/standards>. New users **should** open the help page to assist them with the input parameter definitions.

More detailed information on these safety issues is provided in the:

- Transport Engineering Research New Zealand Limited (TERNZ) 2005, *An assessment of heavy truck safety in Tasmania*, which can be viewed at the following web address:
<http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/pdf/safety/Final_report_v5_4_Aug_05.pdf>.
- Transport Engineering Research New Zealand Limited (TERNZ) 2005, *Report on survey of heavy vehicle rollover stability in Tasmania*, which can be viewed at the following web address:
<http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/pdf/safety/report_on_SRT_survey_v51colour.pdf>.

3.5 COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS SYSTEM

A Compliments and Complaints System is a formal process to enable community members to comment on driving behaviour. The introduction of a Compliments and Complaints System provides an opportunity to recognise good drivers and allows for action to be taken to improve driving practices where needed. It demonstrates to the community that operators are conscious of heavy vehicle safety issues and the impact on the public.

It is **recommended** that a Compliments and Complaints Schemes be set up to suit the needs of a particular operation and while there are many ways to implement a successful system, a few key elements common to all schemes include:

- the need to publicly advertise that feedback is sought;
- details of how the operator will accept a Compliment or Complaint (phone, letter or email); and
- clarifying whether or not an operator will accept an anonymous contact.

The benefit of implementing a Compliment and Complaints System is that higher public scrutiny could deter drivers from committing offences. Drivers may choose to modify their behaviour based on feedback on their performance.

Further information on implementing a Compliments and Complaints System can be obtained by reviewing:

- selected modules from many of the commercial business accreditation systems available;
- selected modules within the various Quality Assurance Systems commercially available;
- some of the heavy vehicle accreditation schemes discussed earlier in the Code;
- the systems currently in use by some heavy vehicle operators; and / or
- building a system to suit a specific operation.

4 OTHER REFERENCE MATERIALS

For specific details of the road law, refer to the:

- *Vehicle and Traffic Act 1999*
- *Vehicle and Traffic (Driver Licensing and Vehicle Registration) Regulations 2000*
- *Vehicle and Traffic (Vehicle Operations) Regulations 2001*
- *Vehicle and Traffic (Vehicle Standards) Regulations 2001*
- *Traffic (Road Rules) Regulations 1999*
- *Traffic Act 1925*

All of these are available at the law website: <www.thelaw.tas.gov.au>.

5 USEFUL CONTACTS

Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER)

Vehicle Operations Branch

Level 7, 10 Murray Street

GPO Box 936

HOBART Tas 7001

Phone: 03 6233 5347

Fax: 03 6233 5210

Heavy Vehicle Approved Inspection Stations

All heavy vehicle pre-registration inspections and defect notice clearances are undertaken by Heavy Vehicle Approved Inspection Stations (HVAIS). A list of HVAIS' can be viewed at the following web address:

<www.transport.tas.gov.au/standards>.

Heavy Vehicle Training Organisations

Details on heavy vehicle driver training organisations can be found in the yellow pages of the phonebook under "Driving Schools."

A list of heavy vehicle training providers is detailed in the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources *Heavy Vehicles Driver Licence and Guidelines*, which can be viewed at the following web address:

<http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/pdf/licence_information/heavy_vehicle_guidelines.pdf>.

Austroads

Austroads is the association of Australian and New Zealand road transport and traffic authorities. Austroads aims to improve road and road transport outcomes.

<www.austroads.com.au>.

National Transport Commission

The National Transport Commission (NTC) is an independent statutory body, which submits policy and legislation recommendations to the Australian Transport Council (ATC) of Federal, State and Territory Transport Ministers for approval.

The NTC also plays a role in co-ordinating and monitoring implementation of approved reforms. The NTC provide publications to help heavy vehicle operators provide best practice systems in the workplace.

<<http://www.ntc.gov.au/Default.aspx?page=A02400305500000020>>.

Australian Design Rules (ADRs)

The ADRs are a set of minimum standards and safety **requirements** used in the design and construction of road vehicles. There are 83 ADRs, which specify such things as brakes, lighting, occupant protection, emissions etc. Tasmanian legislation requires a vehicle, which is built to comply with the ADRs applicable to it at the time it was manufactured, to continue to comply with those ADRs when it is used in service. Further information on the ADRs can be found at:

<<http://infrastructure.gov.au/roads/motor/design/index.aspx>>.

6 GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR CODE PURPOSES

Word	Definition
DRIVER	Someone who drives a heavy vehicle. This can include an operator/driver, owner/driver or sub-contract driver.
MUST	Where ' must ' is used, there is a requirement to do what is said. This means that there is no option other than to do what is said
OBLIGATED	Is equivalent to must .
OPERATOR	A person, business owner or company director who controls or directs the operations of a vehicle/s, or who is otherwise responsible for it. Note: This includes those people who are operator/drivers.
RECOMMEND	Is equivalent to should
REQUIREMENT	Is equivalent to must .
SHOULD	When " should " is used, advice is being given to do something. If an operator and / or driver decides not to adopt the advice there would need to be a sound reason why the advice was not followed and an explanation of what is being done to achieve the desired result to the same standard or better.



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Land Transport Safety

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HOBART TAS 7001
Ph: (03) 6233 5347
Web: www.transport.tas.gov.au/standards

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