

# Chain of Responsibility Policy

SAMPLE

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## Purpose

The purpose of this Chain of Responsibility (CoR) Policy is to ensure that [Company Name] complies with all applicable Chain of Responsibility obligations under Australian Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) and relevant state and territory work health and safety (WHS) legislation.

This policy sets out how [Company Name] will:

- Identify and manage risks associated with transport activities across the supply chain.
- Clarify roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for all parties in the chain.
- Prevent and control practices that may lead to driver fatigue, speeding, overloading, unsafe loads, vehicle defects or other unsafe behaviours.
- Demonstrate due diligence and proactive WHS risk management.

This policy applies to all transport activities undertaken by or on behalf of [Company Name], including road transport, loading and unloading, scheduling, packing, consigning, receiving, warehousing and distribution activities.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees of [Company Name], including managers, supervisors, schedulers, drivers, warehouse staff, production staff and administrative personnel.
- Contractors, subcontractors, agency staff, labour hire workers and volunteers engaged by [Company Name].
- All heavy vehicle transport activities under the control or influence of [Company Name], including:
  - Transport of goods to and from warehouses and distribution centres.
  - Collection and delivery of raw materials and finished products from manufacturing and production sites.
  - On-farm transport, including movement of grain, livestock, produce, fertiliser and agricultural chemicals.
  - Any other logistics and freight activities controlled, directed or influenced by [Company Name].

This policy covers all states and territories in which [Company Name] operates and is to be read in conjunction with [Company Name]'s WHS Policy, Fatigue Management Policy, Driving Safety Procedure, Load Restraint Procedure and relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

## Definitions

### Chain of Responsibility (CoR)

Chain of Responsibility refers to the legal framework under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) that places obligations on all parties who influence on-road heavy vehicle safety, not just the driver. This includes employers, consignors, consignees, loaders, packers, schedulers, loaders/unloaders and operators.

### Heavy Vehicle

A heavy vehicle is any vehicle with a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) or Aggregate Trailer Mass (ATM) of more than the legislated threshold under the HVNL or relevant state legislation. This typically includes trucks, prime movers and trailers, B-doubles, road trains and certain agricultural vehicles when used on public roads.

### Transport Activities

Transport activities include any business operations that use, direct, influence or otherwise affect heavy vehicles, including:

- Consigning, packing, loading, unloading and receiving goods.
- Scheduling, route planning and allocation of jobs.
- Managing and maintaining vehicles.
- Contracting and subcontracting of transport services.
- Supervising, managing and paying drivers.

### Reasonably Practicable

Reasonably practicable means what could reasonably be done at a particular time to ensure health and safety, taking into account the likelihood and degree of harm, what is known or ought reasonably to be known about the risk and controls, the availability and suitability of controls, and the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk.

### Parties in the Chain

For the purposes of this policy, parties in the chain may include, but are not limited to:

- Employer or prime contractor.
- Operator of the heavy vehicle.
- Scheduler of goods or passengers.
- Consignor and consignee.
- Packer of goods.
- Loader and unloader of goods.
- Loader and unloader at farms, factories, warehouses and distribution centres.

## Legal and Regulatory Framework

[Company Name] acknowledges its obligations under relevant legislation, including but not limited to:

- Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) and associated regulations (where applicable).
- Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations in each state and territory of operation.
- Road traffic, fatigue management and dangerous goods legislation.

Under these laws, [Company Name] must, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- Ensure the safety of workers and others who may be affected by its transport activities.
- Eliminate or minimise risks arising from scheduling, loading, vehicle condition, fatigue, speed and other CoR-related factors.
- Ensure that its actions, inactions or demands do not cause or encourage drivers or other parties in the chain to break road transport laws.

Officers of [Company Name] must exercise due diligence to ensure the business complies with its CoR and WHS obligations by:

- Acquiring and keeping up-to-date knowledge of CoR and WHS matters.
- Understanding the operations and associated hazards and risks.

Ensuring there are appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise risks.

Verifying that these resources and processes are being implemented and are effective.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Officers (Directors, Senior Executives)

Officers are responsible for providing leadership, resources and oversight to ensure effective CoR compliance and WHS risk management. Officers must:

- Demonstrate visible commitment to CoR and WHS.
- Approve this policy and ensure it is implemented across all operations.
- Allocate sufficient financial, human and technological resources to manage transport risks.
- Ensure competent personnel are appointed to key roles such as fleet management, scheduling and warehousing.
- Review CoR performance information, including incident reports, audits and non-conformances.