

Heavy Vehicle Pre-Start Check Procedure

SAMPLE

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Purpose

The purpose of this Heavy Vehicle Pre-Start Check Procedure is to ensure that all heavy vehicles operated by [Company Name] are inspected and confirmed safe prior to use each day or shift. This procedure supports [Company Name]'s commitment to providing a safe workplace, preventing vehicle-related incidents, and complying with applicable work health and safety (WHS) legislation and Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL).

This procedure applies to all heavy vehicles, including but not limited to:

- Prime movers and trailers used in transport and logistics
- Tippers, water carts, service trucks and low loaders used in civil construction and earthworks
- Haul trucks, service vehicles, fuel carts and maintenance trucks used in mining and resources
- Tractors, harvesters, spreaders, trucks and utilities used in farming and agriculture

Scope

This procedure covers:

- Daily and pre-shift pre-start inspections of heavy vehicles
- Responsibilities of drivers/operators, supervisors and maintenance personnel
- Identification, reporting and control of defects
- Requirements for documentation and record keeping
- Management of non-conformances and out-of-service vehicles

The procedure applies to:

- All employees, labour hire workers and contractors who operate or supervise the operation of heavy vehicles under the control of [Company Name]
- All heavy vehicles operated on public roads, private haul roads, construction sites, farms and other work locations

This procedure does not replace:

- Manufacturer's instructions and maintenance schedules
- Formal pre-operation training and competency requirements
- Legislative requirements for roadworthiness and heavy vehicle inspections

Where there is any inconsistency, the higher standard of safety must be applied.

Definitions

Term	Definition

Key Definitions

- **Heavy vehicle** – Any truck, prime mover, trailer, bus, plant or agricultural machine that is used for work and requires a pre-start inspection due to its size, complexity or risk profile.
- **Pre-start check** – A systematic inspection of a heavy vehicle conducted before it is first used in a shift or day to confirm it is safe, roadworthy (where applicable) and fit for purpose.
- **Defect** – Any fault, damage, excessive wear or abnormal condition that may affect the safe operation, roadworthiness or environmental performance of a heavy vehicle.
- **Out-of-service** – A status applied to a heavy vehicle that is not to be used due to a safety-critical defect or non-compliance.
- **Operator/driver** – Any person who is authorised and competent to operate a heavy vehicle.
- **Isolation** – The process of ensuring a vehicle cannot be started or moved, typically using keys removal, lock-out devices and signage.

Roles and Responsibilities

Officers and Senior Management

- Ensure adequate resources (time, tools, training and systems) are provided to implement this procedure.
- Ensure WHS risks associated with heavy vehicle operation are identified, assessed and controlled.
- Monitor WHS performance, including pre-start completion rates, defect trends and incident data.

Supervisors and Managers

- Ensure all heavy vehicle operators are trained and competent in this procedure.
- Verify that pre-start checks are completed and documented before vehicles are used.
- Ensure defects are actioned in a timely manner and vehicles are removed from service when required.

- Conduct periodic audits of pre-start records and physical inspections of vehicles.
- Support a no-blame reporting culture that encourages prompt defect reporting.

Drivers and Operators

- Conduct a thorough pre-start check of the assigned heavy vehicle at the start of each shift, or before first use.
- Use the approved [Company Name] Heavy Vehicle Pre-Start Checklist or electronic inspection system.
- Immediately report any defects, hazards or abnormal conditions to the supervisor.
- Tag and isolate vehicles that are unsafe or unroadworthy.
- Do not operate any vehicle that is unsafe, not for purpose or in contravention of road transport laws.

Maintenance Personnel

- Assess reported defects and determine whether the vehicle can remain in service or must be removed from service.
- Prioritise and complete repairs in accordance with risk, manufacturer's guidance and legislative requirements.
- Record all maintenance actions and close out defects in the relevant system.
- Communicate with operators and supervisors about vehicle status and any operating limitations.

WHS Personnel

- Provide guidance on WHS risk management relating to heavy vehicles.
- Assist with incident investigations where vehicle condition or pre-start checks may be a contributing factor.
- Review this procedure in light of legislative changes, industry standards and incident learnings.

Training and Competency

- All heavy vehicle operators must receive training covering:
 - This Heavy Vehicle Pre-Start Check Procedure
 - Use of the specific pre-start checklist or app
 - Basic fault recognition (e.g. tyre damage, leaks, steering issues)
 - Reporting and isolation requirements
- Competency must be verified through: