



# Safely immobilising heavy vehicles and trailers self-assessment checklist

**This tool will assist in reviewing the effectiveness and adequacy of the risk management approach to safe immobilisation and coupling/de-coupling of heavy vehicles and trailers at your workplace.**

## Section A: Audit of occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS)

Review your OHSMS with relevant staff including your occupational health and safety professional, senior management and other supervisors:

1. Verify you have an overarching section in your OHSMS which covers the safe immobilisation of heavy vehicles and trailers.
2. Check your system covers information, training, instruction or supervision for heavy vehicle and trailer immobilisation risks.
3. Check the system covers:
  - safe immobilisation of heavy vehicles
  - working under heavy vehicles and trailers (if applicable)
  - maintenance (if applicable)
  - coupling and decoupling trailers (if applicable).

**Section B:** Verify your OHSMS system is being implemented by your workers and drivers. Seek to verify your system with relevant staff including supervisors, workers and labour hire employees by observing them conduct the activities, asking them to demonstrate what they do and/or asking how they do it.

Please note if you answer no to any of the following questions, it is an area that needs to be addressed as part of your OHSMS. This assessment tool is a guide to what might be expected at a workplace where heavy vehicles are present—it is not an exhaustive list of potential issues for action.

## Section A: Audit of OHSMS

### 1. Safe systems of work

Is there a safe system of work that addresses safe immobilisation of heavy vehicles and trailers when on site and on the road? Yes  No

Examples of what to look for:

- Documentation or processes in your safe system of work supports safe immobilisation of heavy vehicles and trailers when:
  - drivers/workers exit the vehicle
  - working around the vehicle, such as when loading and unloading
  - coupling and de-coupling trailers
  - conducting maintenance on the vehicle or trailer
  - a breakdown or emergency occurs.
- Evidence of site inductions that includes information about safe immobilisation for heavy vehicles and trailers when on-site.

### Guidance



**Safety Alert:**  
**Heavy vehicles and trailers crushing/hitting workers**



**Short Film:**  
**Safe systems to immobilise heavy vehicles and trailers**

### 2. Information, training, instruction or supervision

Are information, training, instruction and supervision provided to workers who work with the heavy vehicles and trailers? Yes  No

Examples of what to look for:

- Drivers and workers are provided with information, instruction, training and supervision regarding working with heavy vehicles and trailers.
- Can workers explain how they have been instructed?
- Is information included in an operator manual?

## Section B: Verification of system

### 1. Safely immobilising heavy vehicles

Have risks to workers when a heavy vehicle has not been safely immobilised been controlled? Yes No

Examples of what to look for:

- A breaking alarm or automatic breaking system fitted to alert the driver upon exiting the vehicle (check Russell Transport case study below).
- Drivers know that they have to use the braking system when out on the road.
- Workers know how to stop the movement of a truck when the braking system has not been engaged and immobilise the vehicle in some other way.
- Drivers can explain how they immobilise their vehicle and check to see if the vehicle's braking system has been engaged.

#### Guidance



##### Case study:

**Russell Transport – Retrofitting a hand-brake alarm**

### 2. Working under heavy vehicles and trailers

Have risks to workers who are working under heavy vehicles or trailers been controlled? Yes No

Examples of what to look for:

- Workers know the process or procedure to manage the risk of being hit or crushed when working under a heavy vehicle or trailer.
- If there is a heavy vehicle or trailer being worked on:
  - check the vehicle is supported by weight rated stands, correctly placed underneath the vehicle on a hard and level surface that is locked and tagged out and wheel chocks are used
  - check the vehicle or trailer is lifted using a suitable weight rated hydraulic hoist, vehicle pit or vehicle ramp
  - ensure hydraulic hoists are weight rated (safe working load) and engraved or stamped on the hoist.
- Ask your workers to demonstrate how to immobilise a heavy vehicle or trailer before getting underneath it to begin mechanical work (check industry guidance listed below).

#### Guidance



##### Industry solution:

**Managing the risks of workers being hit or crushed by heavy vehicles and trailers**

### Truck and trailer maintenance

Have risks to workers from not maintaining heavy vehicles and trailers been controlled? Yes No

Examples of what to look for:

- There are heavy vehicle and trailer maintenance records, fault reporting and modification records and regular auditing records available.
- Safety features on vehicles, such as handbrake alarms and chocks, are in good working order and maintained— there is a regular maintenance schedule, fault reporting, regular audits and start-up procedure.
- The heavy vehicle and trailer has been well maintained and is in good working order (refer Managing risks of plant in the workplace Code of Practice 2013).
- Workshop mechanics know how often they conduct maintenance and this is reflected in the maintenance records.

#### Guidance



##### Code of practice:

**Managing risks of plant in the workplace Code of Practice 2013 (refer Section 3.7 Maintenance, repair and cleaning of plant)**

### 3. Coupling and decoupling trailers

Have risks to workers and members of the public been controlled if a trailer drops when coupling or decoupling when on the road? Yes No

Examples of what to look for:

- Workers know about the process or procedure on how a heavy vehicle and trailer should be coupled and de-coupled safely, including the different brand and types of vehicles and trailers.
- When trucks are being coupled, there is evidence that the person who performs this task has been trained to:
  - park the truck and trailer on a flat, hard surface
  - conduct a functional check, for example a tug test, once the trailer is connected
  - conducts a visual check that the wheel jaws on fifth wheel have engaged the pin

#### Guidance



##### Short Film:

**Coupling and decoupling trailers safely**

### Further action

If you have answered 'No' to any of the questions above, those could be areas which need to be addressed as part of your OHSMS. This assessment tool is a guide to what might be expected at a workplace when heavy vehicles are present—it is not an exhaustive list of potential issues for action.

For assistance managing your workplace risks, visit [worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://worksafe.qld.gov.au).