



Safety Bulletin 123

'Be safe on site, be safe on the road' – HSE press release

Be safe on site and be safe on the road – that was the message from safety specialists speaking at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) Road Transport conference on the 15th May 2009.

During the last three years, 14 people have been killed and more than 2,000 people have been injured by cargo falling from vehicles when they are being loaded or unloaded.

Safety specialists from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) told delegates that accidents and injuries could be avoided if sensible precautions were being followed.

The conference's keynote speaker, Marcia Davies, HSE's Head of Injury Reduction, said:

"Vehicles which are loaded safely for the road can usually be safely unloaded at the workplace – and vice versa. An estimated 2500 manual handling injuries, falls from heights and accidents caused by falling objects result from poorly restrained loads shifting in transit.

"Shifted loads increase the likelihood of accidents taking place – whether they happen on site or on the road – and can put both motorists and loading staff at risk. Properly restraining loads is an important part of transport safety.

"HSE will be working closely with the Vehicle Services Operators Agency, the Highways Agency and the police to take forward the issue of workplace transport safety."

Also speaking at the conference was Carol Grainger, HSE's workplace transport policy manager.

Around a 100 workers are injured by vehicles overturning as a result of unstable loads each year, she said. Around 750 are hurt by falling objects and approximately 2,200 injured after being hit by vehicles in the workplace, Ms Grainger told delegates.

Statistics compiled by HSE show that fork lift trucks were involved in a quarter of all work place transport accidents (27%) – making them the most common types of vehicles to be involved in incidents. Of those workers sustaining injuries, only three out of 10 (31%) were drivers. Handling and storage workers account for a fifth of all injured employees (20%) – the biggest category.

"Workplace transport is a real jigsaw of safety considerations, but it does not need to be a puzzle," Ms Grainger said.

"By law, every employer must make sure that work equipment is maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair – and this includes vehicles. Ensuring that a site is organized with safety in mind, that management processes address safety risks and that staff are properly trained to protect themselves are the key considerations."

'Safe on site – safe on the road' is the message that HSE is urging employers and employees to take on board. Safe appropriate loading on site will result in an unmovable load in transit and provide a safe basis for unloading at the delivery end.



Badly secured loads pose a number of risks, including:

- ✚ Shedding loads in transit, endangering other road users and causing traffic disruption.
- ✚ Vehicles overturning when they become unstable following a load shifting in transit.
- ✚ Loads moving inside the vehicle during transit which then fall off at the point of delivery, with potential to cause injury.
- ✚ Workers climbing onto trailers to deal with a load that has shifted in transit then falling because they have a precarious foot hold, or being struck by parts of the load or suffering manual handling injuries when they try to unload the vehicle.
- ✚ Damage to goods being carried

HSE also recommends that vehicles used should be suitable for any loads they carry, that they have adequate anchor points to secure loads and that all loads are securely restrained with appropriate fastenings.

The HSE website contains advice and guidance for all those involved in transport in the workplace, including site designers, banksmen and fork lift drivers. It provides resources to help tackle vehicle safety at work and covers issues such as personnel, site layout and maintenance, management responsibilities, and vehicle selection and maintenance.

Notes

1. VOSA provides a range of licensing, testing and enforcement services to improve the roadworthiness standards of vehicles ensuring the compliance of operators and drivers, and supporting the independent Traffic Commissioners.
2. If they feel there is a serious risk to other road users, workers or to the driver, HSE and VOSA can enforce a range of regulatory powers, including prohibiting the continued use of the vehicle. HSE and local authorities also enforce health and safety legislation at premises where goods are loaded and unloaded.

If you require any further information, clarification or assistance with the above, then please do not hesitate to contact us;

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Source – The Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk