

## Overview

This standard is about coupling and uncoupling goods vehicle trailers.

It covers the selection of safe and suitable places to couple and uncouple trailers. It includes the identification and use of different coupling equipment, and the relevant legal, safety and operating requirements that apply.

This standard is relevant for drivers of goods vehicles and those who are responsible for coupling and uncoupling goods vehicle trailers as part of their job role.

## Performance criteria

### *You must be able to:*

- 1 maintain the health and safety of yourself and others at all times, in line with the relevant legislation and organisational requirements
- 2 assess the risks associated with the work before starting and throughout the activity and take action to minimise or report risks in line with organisational procedures
- 3 confirm that the required personal protective equipment (PPE) for the work being carried out is worn at all times in line with organisational procedures
- 4 confirm that the relevant training has been received to carry out the work, recognise the limits of your competence and seek access to further training, where required
- 5 identify the allocated trailer for coupling in line with organisational procedures
- 6 check the compatibility of the goods vehicle and the trailer in line with the relevant manufacturers' and the Driving and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) guidelines
- 7 check that the goods vehicle and trailer type, depth and height are compatible for coupling
- 8 manoeuvre the goods vehicle in relation to the trailer, ready for coupling
- 9 check that the trailer's brakes are applied prior to coupling to the goods vehicle
- 10 connect the trailer and goods vehicle, including sliding fifth wheel couplings in line with manufacturers' operating instructions
- 11 manoeuvre the goods vehicle and test that coupling has been established with the trailer
- 12 make all other required connections to the vehicle and trailer when coupling
- 13 confirm that the goods vehicle and trailer systems work properly after coupling, and that the vehicle is safe to drive
- 14 select a safe site for uncoupling trailers from their goods vehicle
- 15 deploy trailer legs in line with manufacturers' operating instructions before uncoupling to prevent trailer grounding
- 16 disconnect the connections between the goods vehicle and trailer when uncoupling, in line with manufacturers' operating instructions
- 17 check that uncoupling has been achieved before driving the goods vehicle away
- 18 maintain effective communication with colleagues when carrying out the work
- 19 respond to unexpected situations when coupling and uncoupling goods vehicle trailers in line with organisational procedures

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20 carry out the work in accordance with approved procedures and practices and in compliance with the relevant statutory, organisational and other requirements relating to coupling and uncoupling goods vehicle trailers

## Knowledge and understanding

### *You need to know and understand:*

- 1 your responsibilities under the relevant health and safety legislation and organisational requirements
- 2 how to identify hazards and assess risks associated with the work being carried out, and suitable control measures and Safe Systems of Work (SSoW) that can be put in place to reduce risks
- 3 the relevant personal protective equipment (PPE) that should be worn when coupling and uncoupling goods vehicle trailers
- 4 the Driving and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) guidelines, manufacturers' operating instructions and organisational procedures for coupling and uncoupling the goods vehicle and trailer
- 5 the different systems for coupling goods vehicles and trailers and how they work
- 6 how to check that the goods vehicle and trailer type, depth and height are compatible for coupling
- 7 how to safely connect and disconnect the different types of connections when coupling and uncoupling the goods vehicle trailer
- 8 how to confirm that the goods vehicle is aligned to the trailer for coupling and uncoupling, and why this procedure must be undertaken
- 9 why and how to check the trailer brake is engaged before coupling and uncoupling
- 10 how to safely check that coupling and uncoupling the goods vehicle trailer has been achieved
- 11 how to check that the goods vehicle and trailer systems work properly after coupling, and that the vehicle is safe to drive
- 12 how to select a safe and suitable site for uncoupling the goods vehicle trailer
- 13 how to prepare the trailer prior to uncoupling from the goods vehicle
- 14 how to deploy trailer legs whilst goods vehicles and trailers are attached
- 15 why and how to confirm all connections are correctly stowed away when not in use
- 16 the roles and responsibilities of colleagues and why it is important to maintain effective communication with colleagues when carrying out your work
- 17 how to respond to unexpected situations when coupling and uncoupling goods vehicle trailers, the actions to take and organisational procedures for reporting issues that cannot be resolved
- 18 the approved procedures and practices, statutory, organisational and other

requirements relating to coupling and uncoupling goods vehicle trailers

## Glossary

**Connections:** air line, electrical lines, fluids

**Goods vehicle:** the vehicle you normally drive, includes trailer when connected, and ancillary equipment

**Health and safety** includes mental and physical wellbeing

**Manoeuvre:** forward movements, reverse movements, turns

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** could include: high-visibility clothing, hard hats, protective clothing, eye protection, masks, gloves, safety footwear

**Safe System of Work (SSoW)** is a method of work that puts in place control measures arising from a risk assessment, in order to manage identified hazards, which are broken down into four elements: safe person; safe equipment; safe place; and safe practice.

**Statutory, organisational and other requirements:**

- Driving, vehicle and transport regulations
- Machinery and equipment regulations
- Workplace safety regulations
- Working time regulations
- Codes of practice
- Organisational requirements
- Environmental, ethical and social considerations

**Unexpected situations** could include:

- Damage to 5th wheel connector trailers
- Damage to connector plate tractor units
- Trailer legs unable to retract and deploy
- Damage to vehicle and trailer connections

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