Low Speed Manoeuvring Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV)

Guidance on how to manage the safe and efficient low speed manoeuvring of Heavy Goods Vehicles.

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Introduction

Low speed manoeuvring (LSM) is a critical part of a HGV drivers' day to day operations and in order to do this safely it is essential that all drivers are proficient in carrying out safe, accurate vehicle manoeuvres. Whether they are navigating a new site layout, manoeuvring onto or off a loading bay or driving in areas with limited space for example town centres, the ability to control a vehicle at slow speeds can make the difference between a safe journey and potentially a dangerous one. Mastering these skills will help to improve safety, confidence, and vehicle control.

Organisations have responsibility for the safe management of their occupational road risk. Appropriate control measures should be introduced for the safe management of low speed manoeuvres based upon their individual operational requirements, such as site and delivery locations, range of vehicle type(s), the skills and experience of employed and agency drivers.

Due to the size, weight, and the limited visibility of HGV's, LSM and parking are critical skills a driver needs for both safety and operational efficiency. Practical driver training will help to develop drivers' confidence and enhance their skills; it can also help reduce the likelihood of incidents involving other road users and damage to property.

It is important that all drivers are adequately trained, informed and instructed in the safe operation of their vehicles and ancillary equipment to ensure they understand the associated risks and control measures in place to safely undertake all LSM and parking.

Safe Vehicle Manoeuvring

The key elements for successful LSM and parking include a combination of driver focus, accurate vehicle control, good observation skills, understanding the vehicle dynamics and dimensions as well as utilising in-vehicle technology.

- **Awareness and Observation**
  360° spatial awareness of your surroundings is very important, especially when manoeuvring in confined areas. Drivers must avoid being distracted by in vehicle technology, mobile phones and tablets, turn off any audible distractions such as radios and do not wear ear buds as these can reduce your awareness of the changes in your surroundings.

  The continual checking of mirrors, blind spots, and in cab video monitors are required throughout any manoeuvre. It is essential that correct observations are carried out especially at the nearside and rear of the vehicle and technology alone should not be relied upon. If it is necessary, exit the vehicle and check any zones of invisibility such as blind spots. Drivers must be aware of their environment including other road users, pedestrians, and roadside furniture. If in doubt, STOP and reassess the situation and if necessary, get out of the vehicle and look (GOAL).

- **Vehicle Control**
  When manoeuvring at low speeds, accurate and controlled steering input is essential to ensure precise vehicle movement and positioning. Using smooth clutch and brake control, with subtle use of the accelerator to ensure stability and reduce sudden movements. For vehicles with automatic transmission, smooth use of the accelerator and brake will enhance control.

- **Environmental Considerations**
  Always consider environmental factors such as inclement weather, slippery, uneven surfaces and potholes that may affect traction and vehicle control when carrying out any vehicle manoeuvre. Be aware of inadequate lighting and poor visibility especially at dusk and at night, as well as when operating in adverse weather, as this can impact your awareness of vulnerable road users, obstacles, and other vehicles.

- **Safety Practices**
  Always comply with The Highway Code, driver regulations and to all site-specific instructions. Commercial drivers should always demonstrate a higher standard of professional competence when driving for work.

- **Warn and Inform Other Road Users**
  Due to the complexity of vehicle dimensions and weight, it is important to communicate your intentions in good time, this allows drivers to warn other road users of their intended actions before changing course, direction, stopping or moving off. Signals should never be confusing and must be cancelled after the manoeuvre is completed.

  Hazard warning lights are to be used to warn other road users of a hazard when your vehicle has broken down or is causing an obstruction and on motorways to warn of traffic congestion ahead. They should only be used for long enough to ensure their purpose has been observed. Do not use them when driving unless on a motorway or unrestricted dual carriage way to warn of a potential hazard ahead.

  If necessary, ask for assistance. When being guided by a traffic marshal always agree what hand signals are going to be used, always ensure a clear line of sight with the person guiding the driver, if at any point the marshal cannot be seen you must stop.

- **Vehicle Familiarisation**
  Drivers must remember to familiarise themselves with the vehicle controls and ancillaries, it is also important to be aware of the dimensions of the vehicle and load to reduce the risk of being involved in a road traffic incident and/or causing damage to the vehicle and property.

Dynamic risk assessment

Reducing the risk of a collision occurring requires not only careful driving, but a driver's ability to quickly assess a situation and take action to keep themselves and other road users safe. A dynamic risk assessment involves identifying 'on the spot' potential hazards and making a quick, appropriate decision on how best to complete the manoeuvre safely to decrease the likelihood of an incident occurring.

Defensibility

As dynamic risk assessments are often done on the spot and not always recorded it is important to look closely at how the organisation can defend themselves in the event of a claim.

Ensure there are documents verifying

- That the organisation has assessed the appropriateness of the use of dynamic risk assessment for the circumstances.
- That employees have received suitable training and instruction in how to carry out a dynamic risk assessment, specific to their environment, and the actions to take dependant on the outcome.
- That employees have received clear guidance on what must be documented and when.

The use of Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS)

ADAS are in-vehicle systems, designed to increase driver safety and help reduce the risk of collisions occurring. This equipment is designed to assist the driver's to manoeuvre safely but should not be solely relied upon to mitigate road risk. Early detection examples include Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB) forward and reversing, Blind Spot Detection (BSD), 360-view cameras and Parking sensors, these can help detect a potential hazard and reduce the risk of a collision if a driver does not react in time.

Checklist

An example HGV Low Speed Manoeuvring Checklist is presented in Appendix 1 which can be tailored to your own organisation.

Specialist Partner Solutions

Aviva Risk Management Solutions can offer access to a wide range of risk management products and services at preferential rates via our network of Specialist Partners.

For more information please visit:Aviva Risk Management Solutions – Specialist Partners

Sources and Useful Links

- Safe manoeuvring - HSE **
- Parking - HSE
- The Highway Code - Guidance - GOV.UK
- The Highway Code - Waiting and parking (238 to 252) - Guidance - GOV.UK
- Manoeuvring Reversing Exercise - GOV.UK
- Direct Vision Standard and HGV Safety Permit Scheme - Transport for London
- Vehicle Safety Technology - VUEgroup

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Additional Information

Relevant Loss Prevention Standards include:

- Dynamic Risk Assessments
- Protecting Vulnerable Road Users
- LGV Safety Permit and Direct Vision Standard

To find out more, please visit Aviva Risk Management Solutions **or speak to one of our advisors.**

Email us at riskadvice@aviva.com or call 0345 366 6666.*

*The cost of calls to 03 prefixed numbers are charged at national call rates (charges may vary dependent on your network provider) and are usually included in inclusive minute plans from landlines and mobiles. For our joint protection telephone calls may be recorded and/or monitored.

Appendix 1 - HGV Low Speed Manoeuvering Checklist

Location	
Date	
Completed by (name and signature)	

	Managing low speed manoeuvres in a heavy goods vehicle	Y/N	Comments
1.	Have you included HGV LSM and Parking in your: • Driving at Work Policy • Driving at Work Risk Assessment • Delivery Point Risk Assessment • Dynamic Risk Assessments Safe Systems of Work		
2.	Are the Driving at Work Policy and LSM associated Risk Assessments: • Communicated to all relevant employees? • Employees have read and understood the Driving for Work policy and risk assessment content? Employees understanding the content has been validated and documented?		
3.	Are the Driving for Work policy and risk assessments reviewed at the required intervals?		
4.	When planning your routes and deliveries, has your organisation taken into consideration: How to minimise risks associated with HGV's operating and manoeuvring on and/or offsite?		
5.	Do the drivers provide details when a dynamic Risk Assessment was used to build into driver instructions?		
6.	Has the outcome of the dynamic risk assessment been shared with managers, drivers and/or trainers?		
7.	Are drivers informed, instructed and trained to carry out low speed manoeuvring safely and efficiently?		
8.	Additional comments:		

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