

RDG Guidance Note: Safe Use of Station Vehicles

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About this document

Explanatory Note

The Rail Delivery Group is not a regulatory body and compliance with Guidance Notes or Approved Codes of Practice is not mandatory; they reflect good practice and are advisory only. Users are recommended to evaluate the guidance against their own arrangements in a structured and systematic way, noting that parts of the guidance may not be appropriate to their operations. It is recommended that this process of evaluation and any subsequent decision to adopt (or not adopt) elements of the guidance should be documented. Compliance with any or all of the contents herein, is entirely at an organisation's own discretion.

Other Guidance Notes or Approved Codes of Practice are available on the [Rail Delivery Group \(RDG\) website](#).

Executive Summary:

This guide provides advice on managing risks associated with the use of station vehicles with reference to training, maintenance of vehicles, and safe working arrangements at stations.

Issue Record

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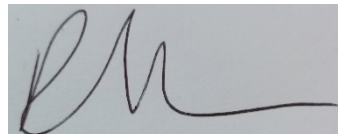
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Contents

About this document	2
Explanatory Note	2
Executive Summary:	2
Issue Record	2
Contents	3
1 Purpose and Introduction	4
1.1 Purpose	4
1.2 Introduction	4
2.3 Definitions	4
2 Supply and Design	5
2.1 Supply	5
2.2 Risk Assessment and Technical Approval	5
3 Operator Competence	5
3.1 Training	5
3.2 Certification	6
3.3 Safe Systems of Work	6
3.4 Logbook	7
3.5 Security	7
3.6 Pre-Use Inspection	7
3.7 Driving Vehicles	7
3.8 Leaving A Vehicle Unattended	8
4 Maintenance	8
4.1 Maintenance Requirements	8
5 Defect Reporting	9
5.1 Accident or Safety Related Incident	9
5.2 Defective Vehicles	9
5.3 High Risk Defects	9
5.4 Sharing Information with Other Users	10
5.5 Defect Reporting: Tenants and Contractors	10
6 Third Parties	10
7 References	10
Appendix A – Risk Assessment Checklist – The Vehicle	11
Appendix B – Risk Assessment Checklist – The Operator	12
Appendix C – Risk Assessment Checklist – The Environment	13

1 Purpose and Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document is intended to assist Station Operators in meeting their obligations to identify and control risks to both their own staff, other railway staff and the public arising as operators of station vehicles.

It does not claim to cover every eventuality that might be faced but does provide an indication of areas to be considered and some answers to common problems.

The purpose of the document is:

- i. to help ensure that a safe environment is maintained for employees, passengers and members of the public;
- ii. to help ensure that only properly maintained vehicles are operated by qualified operatives; and
- iii. to assist in compliance with Railway Group Standards.

1.2 Introduction

Management of station vehicles falls within the 'duty of care' of the leaseholder of a station. It is important to understand this because in law, the leaseholder is usually deemed to be 'in control of the premises' and this includes all of the activities that take place there, not just those conducted by the leaseholder. Managing the safe operation of station vehicles therefore applies to your own activities and having an assurance that others are operating in a similar manner.

Operation of station vehicles does fall within the broader definition of risks under a duty holder's control. The general health and safety duty applicable to a body conducting an undertaking is to ensure that anyone who may be affected by the undertaking is not exposed to risks to their health and safety, so far as it is reasonably practicable.

Because of the wide variety of station vehicles and the way they are used, it is not practicable to give specific guidance on individual machines. There are, however, some common principles and practices that will assist in keeping the risk associated with station vehicles to a level that is as low as reasonably practicable. This is particularly relevant where there is a close interface between people and moving vehicles especially on station concourses and platforms.

2.3 Definitions

Term	Definition in the Context of this Document
Vehicle Operator	A person trained and competent to operate a vehicle capable to carry people or goods or other materials on a station.
Contractor	A group or an individual contracted to provide a service to a Train Operator or other Railway Group member.
Station vehicle	Any powered or unpowered vehicle used for the purpose of transporting people, articles, materials or for maintenance or cleaning purposes.
Train Operator	A Train Operator or any organisation responsible for operating the vehicle in question.

2 Supply and Design

2.1 Supply

Station vehicles, whether bought, hired or leased, should only be procured from an authorised, accredited supplier. This supplier should be registered by the procurement team, following a verification process. An accredited supplier list will reduce the opportunity for unsuitable vehicles to be used.

As part of the verification process a check should be made to make sure that manufacturers and suppliers should have an internal process in place to notify their customers of any serious defect that may require a change/withdrawal campaign for a vehicle.

Station Operators should have in place clearly defined arrangements stating who within their organisation has authority to procure the hiring or purchase of station vehicles. Selection of suitable suppliers or manufacturers should be considered in conjunction with the experience and best practice of other train operators.

2.2 Risk Assessment and Technical Approval

It is important to procure vehicles which are fit for purpose, as the costs associated with 'down time' maintenance can exceed the initial outlay of the vehicle itself. The vehicle should also be environmentally friendly and energy efficient. Prior to purchasing or leasing any vehicle, a suitable risk assessment should be conducted by the Station Operator to ensure safety is considered in respect of the:

- i. Vehicle.
- ii. Vehicle Operator.
- iii. Environment.

See Appendices A1, A2 and A3 to see examples of risk assessment criteria for these three factors.

A technical specification should be obtained from the supplier to assist in the assessment. This information may include:

- i. Maximum speed.
- ii. Maximum weight loading.
- iii. Parking restrictions on gradients.
- iv. Charging facilities.

Station vehicles which could affect the safe operation of the station should have technical approval from a professional head within the business, or Network Rail when vehicles are operating on their Managed Stations.

3 Operator Competence

3.1 Training

Vehicle operators of powered and unpowered vehicles should be trained, with training periodically refreshed to ensure that competence is maintained. All training should incorporate the following five elements:

- i. Practical observation of driving skills. An opportunity should be given to use the vehicle, preferably at a location remote from running lines and the general public. For refresher training, this observation should be carried out whilst the vehicle operator is undertaking normal duties.

- ii. Knowledge of vehicle characteristics and limitations: ‘user’ manuals are a useful aid in this respect.
- iii. Knowledge of local safe systems of work.
- iv. Knowing how to recognise and report defects and reporting procedures for accidents. This competence should be complemented by an understanding of emergency procedures such as use of firefighting equipment.
- v. Procedure for safe recharging of battery units.

Training and re-certification should be carried out by someone with appropriate training skills and a working knowledge of the vehicle and environment. Authorised skills trainers should:

- i. Hold a formal training qualification such as City and Guilds skills training modules.
- ii. Have received formal instruction themselves from the vehicle/plant manufacturers.

A plan should be maintained to indicate dates for re certification of operatives. No operator should operate vehicles outside the validity of their licence or card.

Biennial reassessment of competence is considered good industry practice.

It is recommended that vehicle operators who have not operated vehicles for more than six months should be recertificated in their knowledge and their licence or card updated.

A local record should be kept showing how frequently employees have operated station vehicles. Use of a vehicle logbook which the operator signs before using the vehicle is a simple and effective way of monitoring this. The logbook should include who has undertaken the daily check.

3.2 Certification

When a vehicle operator has successfully completed their training/recertification they should be issued with an operator licence or Authority to Work card. This licence or card should bear the following information:

- i. Name of holder.
- ii. Employer.
- iii. Type of vehicle authorised to operate.
- iv. Expiry date.

The employee’s manager should sign the licence or card.

Once issued, this licence or card should be carried by the operator when on duty and be readily available for inspection if requested by an authorised person.

There is no standard template for a licence or card: each train operator should develop their own style of licence or card incorporating the information shown above. Ideally, the licence or card itself should include a photograph of the holder, although a licence or card supported by an alternative photo identification card is sufficient.

3.3 Safe Systems of Work

Safe systems of work should be developed in conjunction with the end user, i.e. the operator. Where station vehicles are used by third parties, they should be actively involved in the preparation of a safe system of work.

When developing a safe system of work, a risk-based approach to deciding on the system should be considered. The following factors are relevant to the operation of station vehicles:

- i. Conflict between pedestrian and vehicular routes.
- ii. Delineation of routes, including keeping away from a platform edge.
- iii. Surface conditions: braking and control.
- iv. Adequacy of lighting.
- v. Speed restrictions and enforcement measures, e.g. CCTV monitoring, random spot checks.
- vi. Provision of mirrors on bends.

- vii. Adequate signing.
- viii. Designated parking areas.
- ix. Security – both of vehicles and from an ‘operational security’ perspective.
- x. Avoidance of obstruction of track access points, fire exits, etc.
- xi. Suitably secure charging facilities.
- xii. Procedures for dealing with an emergency, such as a vehicle falling onto the line. It is important to have clear instructions for vehicle operators on how to quickly contact the signaller.

3.4 Logbook

Each vehicle should have its own logbook which should, where practicable, be carried with the vehicle.

The logbook is the means by which an operator or maintenance staff can identify defects or the service history of the vehicle. The logbook can also be used to record and monitor who has operated the vehicle.

Each vehicle operator should complete the logbook before taking charge of the vehicle and note any defects recorded by the previous user. If defects, operational incidents or accidents occur during use, these should be recorded by the operator on duty. If the vehicle is to be taken out of use, this should be clearly marked in the logbook as an additional reminder to other vehicle operators.

Maintenance staff should record details of all maintenance, repairs and replacements carried out so that a history of the vehicle’s life is built up.

3.5 Security

When not in use, all mobile plant and vehicles should be secured and immobilised to prevent unauthorised use. They should also be stored in the designated area for the station concerned.

3.6 Pre-Use Inspection

Always ensure that all vehicles are in good condition and that any laid down pre inspection is carried out. A pre-use inspection is not a complex examination of the vehicle, however, as a minimum it should comprise of:

- i. Tyres: visual check that they are properly inflated and have no obvious excessive wear.
- ii. Confirmation that the following are operational:
 - a. Brakes.
 - b. Horn.
 - c. Lights.

A brief inspection of the vehicle for obvious defects should be made, after which the logbook should be completed to show who the vehicle operator is and that the pre-use check has been completed.

3.7 Driving Vehicles

Vehicles should be driven in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions and with the following recognised best practice guidelines:

- i. If a clear view of the road ahead is not available, request the assistance of another member of staff. Agree hand signals to be used to control the movement.
- ii. Establish that it is safe to change direction before doing so.
- iii. Take account of clearances between the vehicle and structures, especially where the risk of entrapment exists.
- iv. Carrying of passengers on vehicles not designed for that purpose should be strictly forbidden and the policy rigorously enforced.
- v. Only qualified vehicle operators should drive the vehicle unless a competent trainer is present, and the vehicle operator is under instruction
- vi. Avoid excessive noise when operating vehicles.
- vii. Do not operate vehicles with insecure or missing machinery guards or shields.

- viii. Ensure all goods carried on vehicles are properly secure.
- ix. Do not use vehicles to tow other vehicles unless they are designed for that purpose and ensure that towing attachments are properly attached.
- x. Do not drive vehicle within 1.25 metres of the platform edge or allow this distance to be compromised during manoeuvres.
- xi. Avoid parking vehicles on platform ramps or any incline.
- xii. Vehicles should not be parked within 1.75 metres of the platform edge or on the outside edge of any yellow warning lines where provided. They should be parked parallel to the tracks.
- xiii. Only use vehicles in the recognised area for operation. Where possible, the traffic route should be marked on the ground to assist in compliance.
- xiv. Vehicles should be driven with due care and attention to people in the vicinity, avoiding rapid acceleration and braking and using an audible warning to alert people of the vehicle's presence.
- xv. Maximum speed of 4 mph to be observed at all times.
- xvi. Minimise reversing.
- xvii. Do not load vehicles beyond their stated capacity. If accidental overloading occurs, the vehicle should be taken out of use and examined by a qualified maintainer.
- xviii. Loads should normally be weight marked. Unmarked items should be assessed using technical advice where necessary.
- xix. When the vehicle is being cleaned, the power switch should be in the off position.
- xx. Only trained and competent employees should be used to inspect battery units. Any low power problems should be quickly reported so that technical assistance can be obtained.

3.8 Leaving A Vehicle Unattended

When leaving a vehicle unattended, the key should be removed, and the handbrake firmly applied. Any vehicle left with the key installed should be immobilised by removing the key and taking it to a place of security, e.g. Station Supervisors Office, to be collected by the vehicle operator. All instances of unsecured vehicles should be reported to the local Station Manager and the manager of the company involved.

4 Maintenance

4.1 Maintenance Requirements

All station vehicles should be subject to periodic maintenance as specified by the manufacturer and which meet, as a minimum, the requirements set out below. If a hire company undertakes to perform maintenance on behalf of the Station Operator, then the Station Operator should satisfy itself that a satisfactory maintenance programme exists.

Each vehicle should have a unique reference number and a service history record into which all maintenance and servicing should be recorded.

The date of the vehicle's 'next maintenance due' date should be clearly displayed on the vehicle, to be visible to the operative, as well as being recorded in the logbook.

The maintenance arrangements should include the inspection and testing of:

- i. Braking and steering systems.
- ii. Lights.
- iii. Indicators.
- iv. Horns.
- v. Travel and reversing alarms.
- vi. Safety and emergency stop systems.
- vii. Immobilising devices.
- viii. Firefighting equipment.
- ix. Speed limiting devices.
- x. Luggage or handrails.

The above list is not exhaustive but does highlight the principal safety related features known to be

factors in vehicle accidents and incidents.

5 Defect Reporting

5.1 Accident or Safety Related Incident

If an accident or safety related incident occurs to the vehicle, it must be reported. All incidents should be subject to investigation.

If there is a near miss between a station vehicle and a person then this should be reported through the Network Rail close call procedure.

If a defect on the vehicle is a factor, this information may need to be cascaded to users of that type of vehicle throughout the rail industry.

Details of the accident/incident should be recorded in the vehicle's logbook and retained for inspection.

5.2 Defective Vehicles

On being notified of a defect in a station vehicle, the necessary action should be taken to ensure the safety of employees, contractors and members of the public.

Vehicles having a defect should be taken out of service and not used until such time as the defect has been properly rectified by maintenance staff.

The defective vehicle should have a notice placed over the driving controls as a reminder to vehicle operators that the vehicle is defective. The keys should be withdrawn after the vehicle has been quarantined to prevent further use.

Employees should not endeavour to repair defective vehicles themselves. Qualified maintenance staff should always be sought.

5.3 High Risk Defects

Station Operators should ensure they have formal arrangements to record high-risk defects and accidents involving station vehicles. A high-risk defect is one that has the potential to cause death or injury, or endanger trains, people, infrastructure or the environment. For example, the failure of a braking system or audible warning equipment.

The vehicle (or component that has failed) should be clearly marked with a label indicating that it is not to be used and should be moved to a quarantine area, awaiting the arrival of qualified maintenance staff. As with general defects, the keys should also be quarantined to prevent further use.

Quarantine areas should be secure from the public and have protection that prevents evidence deterioration on the vehicle. For small components, they should be placed in a dry plastic bag. Fractures should be covered in grease to prevent rusting.

The label, which should be durable and should show the following information:

- i. Date of failure.
- ii. Vehicle from which the component came.
- iii. Nature of the failure.
- iv. Person informed of the defect and on what date and time.
- v. Date the component was fitted and its serial identification.
- vi. Equipment identification.
- vii. Person to whom the investigation report should be sent.
- viii. Person who found or removed the component.
- ix. Number of pieces.

5.4 Sharing Information with Other Users

When a high-risk defect has been reported, the information should be shared with other users of similar vehicles within the industry. The information and details of any corrective actions taken should be forwarded to the Network Rail National Control Centre. This is additional to the incident being entered onto the SMIS system.

If, however, it is believed that the incident or accident requires an:

- i. urgent campaign check;
- ii. component replacement;
- iii. repair programme; and/or
- iv. withdrawal of the vehicle;

then it should be reported on NIR-online as required by RIS-3350-TOM.

5.5 Defect Reporting: Tenants and Contractors

Contractors and tenants who operate station vehicles should be advised during safety briefs of the need to report such defects to the Station Facility Owner (SFO). For tenants, if an accident or defect occurs which only affects the confines of their area, they are generally responsible for meeting the requirements of legislation. If the incident or defect has an influence outside their own area, the SFO should be notified. Similarly, if the equipment concerned belongs to the SFO, they should be advised.

6 Third Parties

The SFO is responsible for the safe operation of their leased areas. Where the SFO has no direct control of third parties such as infrastructure contractors on an SFO facility, a monitoring system should be implemented to ensure any safety standards set are being consistently met. It is usual to agree a programme of routine monitoring activities with the third party concerned: indeed, the programme's effectiveness is improved when all parties are involved.

Frequency of monitoring is to be commensurate with perceived risk or known problem areas.

7 References

RIS-3350-TOM Communication of Urgent Operating Advice - RSSB

Appendix A – Risk Assessment Checklist – The Vehicle

Risk Assessment Criteria	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Comments
Does it meet essential health and safety requirements? This is usually denoted by a prominently displayed CE mark.			
Are there any sharp edges or other hazards that could injure the operator or, if appropriate, passengers?			
Are moving parts secured against accidental contact or entanglement?			
Can safety devices be overridden: for example, speed restrictors or power cut out devices linked to sensing mechanisms in the seat?			
Controls: are the operating controls clearly laid out and identifiable? Are emergency stop controls prominently marked as such?			
Visibility: Does the vehicle offer good all-round visibility to the operator?			
Are braking devices effective on gradients?			
Is the vehicle fitted with appropriate visual and audio devices to warn pedestrians and others of its presence?			
Is the vehicle suitable for the purpose it is required? Experience has shown that many station vehicles spend more time quarantined awaiting repairs than they do in use, as a result of being used beyond their design capability (see Section 5).			
The vehicle should be capable of being properly secured when left unattended.			

Appendix B – Risk Assessment Checklist – The Operator

Risk Assessment Criteria	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Comments
Is a high level of technical skill required to operate the vehicle? This will affect the level of training and refresher training necessary.			
Can the controls be handled comfortably, without distraction to the operator?			
Is the seating position ergonomically suitable? Remember that some employees will spend much of their shift driving such vehicles.			
If it is expected that more than one person may ride on the vehicle, ensure the vehicle is designed for this purpose. It is not advisable to purchase a 'driver only' vehicle, knowing that it may be misused by employees 'hitching a lift'.			
All potential operators must be able to meet the medical requirements set down in Railway Group standards applicable to operators and supervisors of plant.			
A minimum age of 17 is mandated for station vehicle operators.			

Appendix C – Risk Assessment Checklist – The Environment

Risk Assessment Criteria	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Comments
Assessment needs to consider the ability to manoeuvre the vehicle within the restrictions of the station infrastructure – e.g. turning circles, station pillars, seating and retail outlets.			
Gradients on slopes: has the vehicle the ability to be controlled on slopes, especially under loaded conditions?			
Storage facilities: are there adequate storage facilities that are of a suitable size and secured from unauthorised access?			
Secure area available where battery charging operations are carried out. Any battery charging area should also have adequate ventilation.			
Are the surfaces on which the vehicle will operate level and able to withstand the weight of the vehicle? Consider overbridges which may form part of the traffic route. Approval of the Infrastructure Controller will be required to ensure the weight loading does not exceed the bridge's loading capability.			
Are there specific or preferred routes for the vehicle to travel along?			

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