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Vehicle Logistics Safe Loading Code of Practice



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Transporter Training, Risk Awareness
and High level Certification.

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FORWARD

This Safe Loading Code of Practice (The Code) has been compiled to offer guidance to drivers and operators of vehicle transporters to address the basic issues which can lead to serious incidents where personal injury and damage are all too common.

We complete Dynamic Risk Assessments as part of our everyday routine, so this would be expected to continue when operating any vehicle transporter to help highlight and avoid any potential risk to safety.

A full and comprehensive training programme should be utilised to help drivers assess how to avoid risk to improve safety and their ability and professionalism when working.

Without informed guidance and training, we will not see the high standards required to operate a car transporter safely.

Vehicle Logistics

The Code

The procedures relating to operating a vehicle transporter put the driver at risk in five main areas.

To simplify access to the information, each group has been designated a reference code.

Driving the transporter – **Code 1**

- Drivers Hours Rules and Regulations
- Walkround checks – Pre-use vehicle inspection
- Highway code
- Driving safety

Assessing the loading area – **Code 2**

- Identify a safe location?
- Live lane operations and sharing space with passing traffic
- Closed compounds where safety is assumed but not guaranteed

Vehicle Logistics

The Code

Loading on the transporter – **Code 3**

- Assessment of vehicle to be loaded
- Vehicle control
- Loading and un-loading procedure
- Awareness of edge protection to include guideposts, guide cables and wheel stops

Working at height – **Code 4**

- Working at height
- Using the attached ladders
- Using multi position guide posts
- Walking on the decks
- Securing vehicles while on the transporter

Working on and around the transporter – **Code 5**

- Pre-use inspection
- Accessing and egressing loaded vehicles
- Slip and trip hazards
- Walking under low decks (risk of head injury)
- Load Security
- Load Securing Guidelines
- Measuring the loaded height
- Bridge Strikes

Electric vehicles (EVs) – **Code 6**

- Risk of explosion/ fire/ toxic chemicals
- Safety Measures

Vehicle Logistics

The Code

Why do we need a Code of Practice?

- All employers and operators are responsible for providing a safe place to work for its employees and staff. Every transporter and all associated equipment and PPE should be issued and regularly inspected to ensure that its safe, functional, and fit for purpose.
- Drivers are required to complete a walk round inspection of the company vehicle they will be driving at the start of each shift. Identifying any defects and highlighting worn items or concerns before the vehicle moves are the driver's responsibility and help to prevent breakdowns or failures which can cause incidents when driving.
- The DVSA 'Guide to maintaining roadworthiness' is available to read online and contains up to date information relating to vehicle checks, maintenance and inspection frequencies. Links throughout The Code.
- Specific regulations [LOLER](#) and [PUWER](#) cover Transporter equipment and all working operational items. These regulations must be referenced and adhered to where appropriate, to help safeguard workplace activities.

The Code has statutory force, which means that certain categories of people have a legal duty to have regard to regulatory procedures when managing drivers and workloads or working on or around vehicle transporters.

Vehicle Logistics

The Code

How should the Code of Practice be used?

- The Code of Practice provides guidance to anyone who is working in the Vehicle Logistics Industry. It describes their responsibilities when acting or making decisions. In particular, the Code focuses on those who have a duty of care or responsibility to ensure safe working practices are in place, understood and adhered to.

Who is the Code of Practice for?

- Specific regulatory guidance is in place for personnel in the Vehicle Logistics Industry (i.e., Drivers Hours, Health and Safety at Work). For the most part, the Code should be viewed as guidance rather than instruction. But if they have not followed relevant guidance contained in the Code then they will be expected to give good reasons why they have departed from it to relevant statutory enforcement agencies.
- However, the Code applies more generally to everyone who makes decisions for themselves. This includes managerial staff as well as drivers. Although they are not legally required to have regard to the Code, the guidance given in the Code will help them to understand current rules and regulations as well as all Safe Working Practices. They should follow the guidance in the Code as far as is reasonably practicable.

The Code

Drugs and Alcohol policies

Overview

Employers have a legal duty to protect employees' health, safety and welfare. Understanding the signs of drug and alcohol misuse (or abuse) will help you to manage health and safety risk in your workplace, develop a policy to deal with drug and alcohol-related problems and support your employees.

All organisations can benefit from an agreed policy on drug/alcohol misuse. You could include a drug and alcohol policy as part of your overall health and safety policy.

Further information can be found [Here](#).

The Code

PPE

Requirements for your role

Employers have duties concerning the provision and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) at work.

PPE is equipment that is provided to protect the user against health and safety risks at work following an appropriate risk assessment. It can include items such as safety helmets, gloves, safety footwear, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, and safety harnesses.

Hi-Viz Clothing

Hi-Viz clothing is worn to alert, and to ensure employees are visible when working in any risk environment. Studies have shown that orange garments are more visible than yellow.

High visibility clothing conforming to BS EN 471, Table 1, Class 2 or 3, must be worn at all times. This will comply with the requirements of clause **4.2.3(b)** in all cases.



4.2.3(b)
2 band and
braces

Jackets with sleeves in accordance with **4.2.4** and to Class 3 must be worn on dual carriageway roads with a speed limit of 50mph or above.



Clause 4.2.4
full length
sleeves

Make every attempt to keep all jackets and waistcoats fastened when working at height as open garments can become snagged or caught on guideposts, which can lead to falls from height.

Link to HSE guidance: [High visibility clothing](#)

The Code

PPE

Protective gloves

There are many types of protective gloves available for use by employees to safeguard their hands when working. The ideal protective glove is the glove that the driver feels comfortable wearing.

Thin gloves are an advantage when using ratchets and straps as they give more accuracy and control but do not give any form of weather protection.



Thick gloves give greater protection from sharp objects but are cumbersome and do not give the control of the thinner gloves.



Involving your drivers when sourcing gloves will help to identify the most suitable garment, while preventing injury and avoiding waste due to uncomfortable or ill-fitting items.

The Code

PPE

Safety footwear

There are vast amounts of safety boots available. Safety boots should provide ankle, toe, and heel support, but care must be taken when checking fitting to also ensure that the boot treads are suitable to grip the surfaces where car transporter drivers operate. Raised/thick treads that could cause a trip hazard on punched decking should be avoided.

High Safety Boots give excellent impact and weather protection to the foot and ankle. They can lack movement but give very good support.



Safety shoes give good impact and weather protection to the foot and allow more movement but less support against twisted ankles.



The Code

PPE

Safety Eyewear

Employees in work environments are susceptible to falling debris and dirt which can damage eyes. Protective eyewear can help to prevent debris ingress.



Safety glasses provide the user with eye protection when working/securing under locked decks.

Very useful when working with used vehicles or salvage due to rust and associated debris that can come loose.

Bump caps

Safety Bump Caps should be made available for drivers to use when working underneath a deck or when they feel at risk of head injuries while carrying out their duties.

Bump caps are designed to protect against concussion from contact with overhead items i.e., the underside of decks and rams, **NOT** falls from height.



Drivers should understand that access, and egress of vehicles when wearing a bump cap can be hazardous, so correct use of this PPE at the appropriate times is required to ensure that further risk is avoided.

The Code

PPE

Safety Harnesses

Safety Harnesses are expected to be worn when employees are working at height to arrest falls.

Currently there are no suitable fall arrest systems available to our industry that allow the driver to operate with freedom while preventing falls.

On any current transporter design, the use of safety harnesses would cause further risk to the driver, so their use is advised against.



The Code

PPE

PPE use and Employer/Employee responsibilities

Operating a vehicle transporter can be a dangerous activity so the employer must provide the correct equipment to make the driver's role as safe as possible. Making the workplace safe includes providing instructions, procedures, training, and supervision to encourage people to work safely and responsibly.

It is then the responsibility of the Driver to inspect the equipment regularly, highlighting any defective items to replace as necessary and to always wear the relevant equipment when working to help prevent injury.

Do not attempt to work if the relevant PPE is unfit for purpose.



Code 1

Driving the Transporter

Code 1

Driving the transporter - Cards

To legally drive the transporter, the driver must hold the correct driving licence qualification for the vehicle type.

Basic licence category requirements for vehicle transporters;

Single car transporter 3.5t – CAT B

Single car trailer up to 3.5t – CAT BE

Rigid transporter over 3.5t up to 7.5t – CAT C1

Rigid transporter over 7.5t – CAT C

Combination or articulated vehicle over 7.5t – CAT CE



Code 1

Driving the transporter - Cards

When driving for hire and reward with vehicles over 3500kg, the driver must also hold a current Driver Qualification Card (DQC, also known as the DCPC card).

You must carry this with you at all times when working.



A Tachograph Card must also be carried when driving vehicles over 3500kg, even if you only drive for part of one day in a seven-day period.



Code 1

Driving the transporter – Drivers Hours

Currently, all UK LGV drivers are regulated by the EU Drivers Hours directive (EC562/2006) using the guidance document (GV262). Basic points are stated below but the full directive to include Drivers Hours, daily and weekly rest requirements and Working time, can be viewed [Here](#)

The main EU rules on driving hours are that you must not drive more than:

- 9 hours in a day - this can be extended to 10 hours twice a week
- 56 hours in a week
- 90 hours in any 2 consecutive weeks

All driving you do under EU rules must be recorded on a tachograph card, chart, or manual record in the event of a faulty tachograph unit or lost/faulty card.

Code 1

Driving the transporter – Breaks and Rest Periods

Breaks and rest

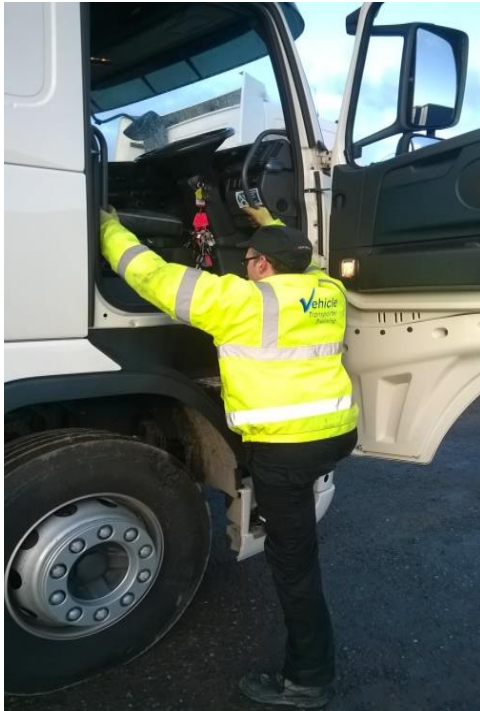
The main points of EU rules on breaks and rest are that in any 24-hour period you must take:

- 11 hours rest every day - you can reduce this to 9 hours of rest 3 times in any working week between any 2 weekly rest periods
- An unbroken rest period of 45 hours every week - you can reduce this to 24 hours every other week, but this will incur a compensation period to pay back any time reduction
- A break or breaks totalling at least 45 minutes after no more than 4 hours 30 minutes driving. If splitting the breaks, the first break must be a minimum of 15 minutes and the second at least 30 minutes.
- Your weekly rest after a maximum 6 consecutive 24-hour periods of working, starting from the end of the last weekly rest period taken.
- Any working time must be recorded and records held for a minimum of 24 months.

Code 1

Driving the transporter – Cab entry and Exit

Entry and Exit of the drivers cab



- The driver should inspect the security of the footsteps and hand holds before use.
 - With the driver's door open and holding the available hand holds the driver should step onto the footstep then climb into the cab and into position sitting in the driver's seat.
 - **Use of the steering wheel as a hand hold is advised against due to the risk of movement when climbing in.**
-
- Exit from the cab is a reverse of the entry procedure making sure your feet are safely positioned on the footsteps and both hands are positioned on the hand holds as the driver steps down to the ground.

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure they are wearing suitable clothing and footwear and that they use the fitted seat belt at all times, and the operator's to audit and enforce use of appropriate PPE.

Code 1

Driving the transporter – Walk round checks

Daily Walk round checks

- It is the legal responsibility of the Operator and Driver to ensure that vehicles being used are in a roadworthy condition. To help achieve this, the driver carries out a walk round check of the vehicle and trailer before any work begins.
- With the Tachograph card entered and on Other Work, the driver should then inspect the cab interior and controls before completing a walkaround inspection of the exterior (to include the security of any loaded vehicles and safe loading equipment).
- Any safety defects found on this check must be reported using the companies defect reporting procedure and repaired before the vehicle is used.

A full guide on how to inspect your vehicle can be found [Here](#)



Code 1

Driving the transporter – The Highway Code

Highway code

- The Highway Code applies to England, Scotland, and Wales. The Highway Code is essential reading for everyone and should be used as a guide for all drivers of vehicles below 3.5t
- Drivers of single car transporters should adhere to the Highway Code and Working Time Directive
- The most vulnerable road users are pedestrians, particularly children, older or disabled people, cyclists, motorcyclists, and horse riders. It is important that all road users are aware of the Code and are considerate towards each other. This applies to pedestrians as much as to drivers and riders.



A link to the Highway Code can be found [Here](#)

Code 1

Driving the transporter – Driving Safety

Driving safety

Ensuring that you are fit to work and have had your required daily or weekly rest is a basic responsibility of any regulated driver before getting behind the wheel. If you are using prescribed medicine, always check that their use does not affect your ability to drive. If in doubt, contact your doctor.

How the load is positioned and secured has a huge effect on how the vehicle drives and responds to driver input. Following The Code's safe loading guidance can help to make your vehicle safer to drive before you have even left the site so take all steps possible to ensure good weight distribution, compliant securing and that the measured height of the overall load is known and recorded. See **Code 5** for further details.

The security of the load is not just the vehicles loaded on the transporter, but also anything that may be left or positioned on the deck. This could include unused safe loading equipment, oil cans, water bottles etc. If anything is viewed as loose or has the possibility to fall from your vehicle, you can be prosecuted for insecure load.

[National Highways](#) are constantly having to close motorway lanes to enable lost straps and ratchets to be removed so please check all are secure before travel.

Code 2

Assessing the Loading Area

Code 2

Assessing the loading area

Assessing the loading area

Loading and un-loading vehicles from car transporters at the side of the road is sometimes unavoidable. This places the driver at risk from passing traffic so every attempt should be taken to identify the most suitable location to park.

Key points to clarify before parking:

- Check for any parking restrictions
- Your parked vehicle will not block the road or any required access
- You can ideally park with any control levers to the kerbside ***
- All warning lights are used to alert approaching traffic
- You have your Hi-Viz on, and have checked the road is clear before exiting the drivers cab

*** There are times when parking your vehicle on the opposite side of the road (facing oncoming traffic), is the only option due to available access points or restrictions. Always make every attempt to avoid parking this way as you will be required to stand in the live lane to operate the decks. This places you at an increased safety risk, so always assess the danger before starting to work.

Do not take unnecessary risks. If you believe that you are at risk of the conditions (or in the loading area), please seek further advice from your line manager.

Code 2

Assessing the loading area - Live lane operations and sharing space with passing traffic

Live lane operations

Working at Height carries a very high risk for a car transporter driver but if acting responsibly, you are in control of your actions and (to the most part), whether you fall or remain safe. However, working in the live lane carries a far more serious risk as you cannot control the actions of other road users.

- Use any 'and all' warning lights fitted to the transporter to alert approaching traffic
- Think ahead. Plan your load and securing to spend as little time as possible in the live lane.
- Always remain vigilant – Never assume that an approaching road user has seen you!
- Always wear your Hi-Viz clothing – Make yourself as visible as possible.
- If you are securing a vehicle in positions that only require three straps, always favour the kerbside of the vehicle with two straps so you only need to attach one strap in the live lane. Those 30 seconds saved could save your life.

Code 2

Assessing the loading area - Closed compounds where safety is assumed but not guaranteed

Closed compounds

Working, loading and un-loading in closed compounds removes the risk from sharing the public highway with other road users but this is not to say that you are now free from risk.

Your loading area may contain multiple loading bays containing car transporters separated by a few feet. There will more than likely be other drivers loading and unloading their trucks in the same area. There have been many incidents and near misses in closed compounds where complacency is a contributory factor.

- Establish and understand site rules, and parking procedure i.e., Drive in, Drive out or Reverse in, Drive out?
- Always be vigilant and assess the risk before you start to work
- Never rush, or try to keep up with other drivers while loading
- Be alert at all times and stay focused when driving from the end of a loading lane in case of passing vehicles.
- Always re-check your work after talking to fellow drivers – it is so easy to forget to secure a vehicle or raise/lower a deck.
- Further information on safe sites transport can be found at: [Safe sites transport](#)

Code 3 Loading on the Transporter

Code 3

Loading on the transporter - Assessment of vehicle to be loaded.

Assessment of vehicle to be loaded

Although you may only be loading from the back of the transporter, it is still crucial that the vehicle controls are in a serviceable condition. For example, attempting to drive onto the transporter with a vehicle that has no brakes should not be attempted. In this instance, a thorough risk assessment and use of specific equipment (i.e., winch), would be expected.

A key skill as a car transporter driver is that you can adapt very quickly to different types of vehicles, with the following basic checks completed before attempting to load;

- Are all openings (doors, bonnets etc), closed securely and the mirrors folded in?
- Are there any visible fluid leaks from the vehicle?
- Does the vehicle start?
- Is the accelerator and clutch ok?
- Do 1st and reverse gears engage and work ok?
- Is the steering working ok?
- Are the brakes working effectively?

After the driver has carried out the dynamic risk assessment, should a vehicle that is to be loaded be deemed unsafe to load, it should be moved to a safe location and further advice should be sought from the line manager

Code 3

Loading on the transporter – Vehicle control

Vehicle control

Once you are confident that the vehicle can start and drive effectively you should adjust your seated position to allow not only good control of the vehicle but also to give you a better viewpoint. Always ensure that any jewelry, watches, belt buckles are removed or covered when loading to prevent scratching vehicles

Most training programmes would advise having the driver's side window open to allow you to look out and along the side of the loading vehicle in preference to using the vehicles mirrors.



This is not to say that it is impossible to drive on a transporter looking through the windscreen or using the mirrors, but it is generally easier for a driver to be accurate when looking directly at where the tyre is and where the vehicle is heading towards. Using this method when loading and un-loading can take some time before its second nature to the driver due to the required body position to gain the best view. Care should always be taken to prevent head injuries when passing posts and pillars. Always be aware of the loading vehicles position on the decks, and where you are heading towards.

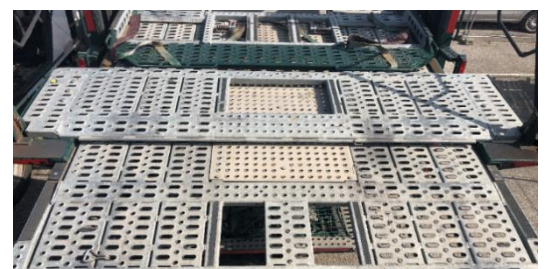
Code 3

Loading on the transporter – Loading and un-loading procedure

Vehicle control – Loading and un-loading procedure

Before any loading begins

- Complete a final check of the decks for obstructions such as loose securing equipment that may cause slip and trip hazards as well as tyre and wheel damage.
- Any loose safe loading equipment should be stowed securely to prevent loading damage and insecure load when driving.
- Position yourself in a controlled and comfortable position in the driver's seat where you have full control of the foot pedals. Only lean out of the side window as much as you need to in order to align and position the vehicle on the deck.
- Beware of protruding parts – Mind your head!
- Select the correct and suitable gear in order to load the vehicle – This is particularly relevant when loading high performance vehicles e.g., 4 x 4 and high specification vehicles.
- Do not use excessive speed and be wary of the various bumps and depressions that make up the deck configuration.

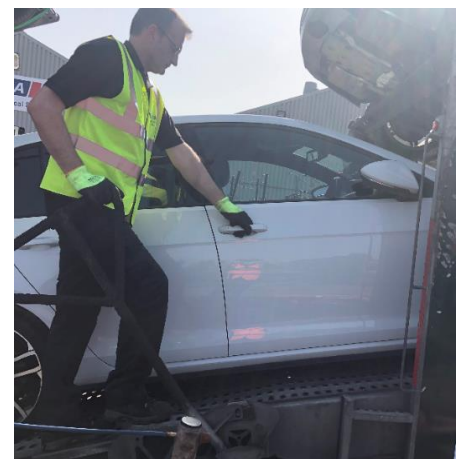


Code 3

Loading on the transporter – Loading and un-loading procedure

When finally placing a vehicle on its deck, it should be;

- Positioned slightly to the passenger side where possible to allow for the driver's door to be opened wider.
- Load vehicles in positions that allow the easiest and safest access / egress and use of appropriate anchor points in line with the “three point of contact” rule when getting into and out of vehicles.
- Where possible avoid loading automatic vehicles in positions where the drive wheels are required to turn to slide the deck in or out.
- Once in position the vehicle should be left in the most appropriate state i.e., forward / reverse gear – “Park” – hand brake applied to eliminate the risk of uncontrolled or unexpected movement. Ensure all vehicle windows are fully closed and the handbrake warning light is on before switching the ignition off.



Code 3

Loading on the transporter – Awareness of edge protection

Awareness of edge protection

Edge protection systems are designed to help prevent operatives from falling from height. Car transporters also utilise forward edge protection (usually on the deck over the driver's cab), to offer some resistance to stop the vehicle from driving off the deck.



Any forward edge protection (wheel hoop, wheel drops etc.) should see the vehicle centrally positioned on the deck to ensure the tyres are squarely in the drops, against the edge protection, to allow good access for the driver to secure.

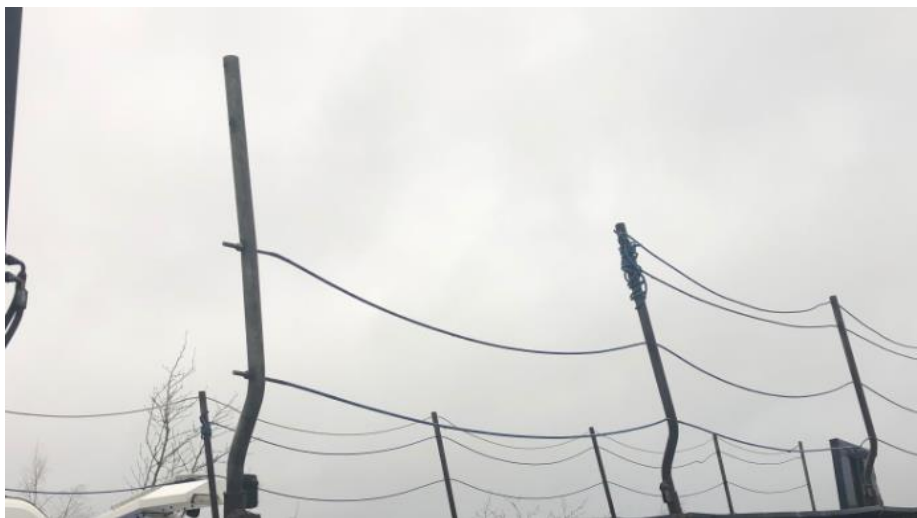
All rails/cables used for edge protection should be a minimum of 910mm from the deck, with a minimum of two rails/cables evenly spaced on open deck transporters with one at the top and the second halfway between the top rail and deck.



Code 3

Loading on the transporter – Awareness of edge protection

All edge protection should be inspected at least daily. Any worn or damaged items should be defected and reported for rectification. Failure to do so could lead to falls from height so be vigilant, protect yourself and those around you. It may be necessary to isolate or suspend using a deck until it is assessed and/or repaired.



Each rail/cable should have a maximum sag of no more than 20mm to ensure it gives the required support in the event of a slip, trip or fall. If there is too much sag, the cables will not provide sufficient support to prevent falls.



Code 4 Working at Height

Code 4

Working at Height

Working at height remains one of the biggest causes of fatalities and major injuries.

Common cases include falls from ladders...



...and through uneven decks and open sections



however, we have also seen a rise in the number of injuries from trips and falls from lower decks.



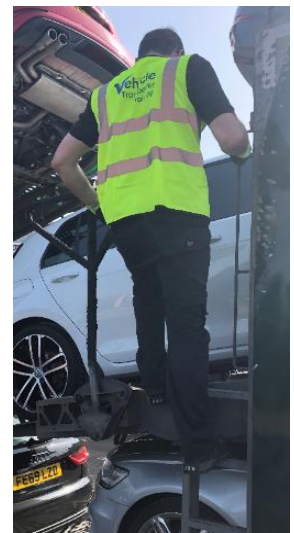
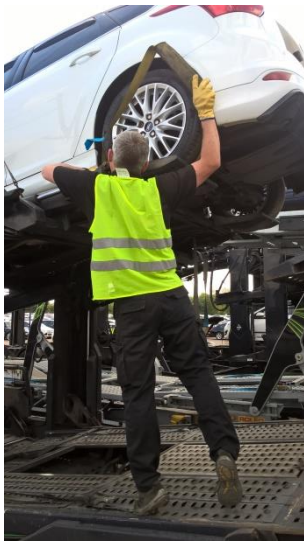
Always assess your workplace to reduce risk and improve your personal safety.

Code 4

Working at Height

‘Work at height’ means work in any place where, if there were no precautions in place, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury (for example a fall through an open section of deck). The HSE Working at Height guidance document can be viewed [Here](#)

By using the following guidance, you can have a positive effect on your personal safety and the safety of those around you.



Code 4

Working at Height - Using the attached ladders

Using the attached ladders

All ladders, including any fitted to the front of the driver's cab, should be of a sufficient height, width, and strength, and securely fixed in position and be unobstructed. Unless it is safe to do so (secondary restraint in place), operatives should not be expected to carry out tasks from ladders that require the use of both hands. An example of such a task is securing a vehicle on the peak deck (over the cab), using the front ladder. The use of hand ratchets which can be operated with one hand would be appropriate for this location, so that the person undertaking the task can hold onto a fixed anchor point fitted to the front of the decking with the other.

Guidance is given within this Code, but full training should be given to the operative to ensure safe working procedures are understood and demonstrated.



Code 4

Working at Height - Using the attached ladders

Using the attached ladders

A multi deck car transporter can have several ladders mounted to the sides to aid access and egress of the decks in specific positions.

Before attempting to climb the ladder, can the deck be lowered to allow you to work from the ground? If not;

- Assess the condition of the ladder before attempting to climb. Is it clean and free from grease and debris?
- Climb the ladder **maintaining three points of contact**.
- You should always climb one rung at a time, moving only one hand or one foot at a time to maintain your composure. Please refer to Safe System of Work guidance for safe ladder use.
- Always face the ladder as you climb, and only use the rungs to climb opposed to the side rails.
- When stepping onto the deck or on to the ground, always ensure you have secure hand holds and the area you are stepping onto is hazard free. This way, if your feet slip, you still have a secure grip between your hands and the ladder to prevent a fall.



Code 4

Working at Height - Using multi position guide posts

Most Transporters are equipped with multi position guide post systems. If used correctly, these have been designed to offer the driver greater security when working at height. Incorrect use can increase the risk of falls from height.



Code 4

Working at Height – Walking on the decks

Walking on the decks

- When preparing to load or unload vehicles, position the decks at their lowest possible height (in accordance with the manufacturers guidelines), to minimise the loading angle. Working at height should be kept at an absolute minimum – It is far safer (where possible), to lower the deck to secure or release a loaded vehicle while standing on the ground, rather than working on the deck in an elevated position.
- Ensure that the air lock release button(s), is working correctly and all decks are suitably locked into position and supported BEFORE working on the transporter or driving any vehicles on to the decks. If the deck drops as a result of chain or equipment failure, you could be crushed.



Unlocked



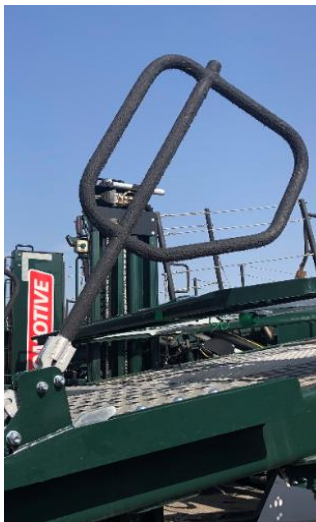
Locked

Code 4

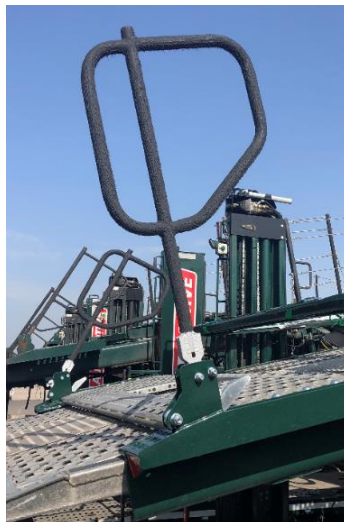
Working at Height – Walking on the decks

Walking on the decks

- Whenever possible plan the loading sequence and deck positions for each vehicle to be loaded in order to eliminate or minimise the exposure to open areas on the decks.
- If the transporter is fitted with adjustable side protection e.g. folding safety posts, they should be put into position prior to loading that particular deck (preferably from the ground with the deck lowered), in order to eliminate / minimise the risk of falling:



Closed



Standard open



Open – extra room

- Check all side protection posts and cables are in a serviceable condition. Any defective or damaged items should be defected for rectification.
- If a guidepost or cable is damaged, the use of that deck is prohibited until the defected item has been rectified. Do not attempt to affect a repair yourself. This is a major safety risk.

NEVER ATTEMPT TO LOAD IF A POST OR CABLE IS DAMAGED OR YOU SUSPECT IT IS. DEFECT AND INFORM AS REQUIRED.

Code 4

Working at Height – Securing vehicles while on the transporter

Securing vehicles while on the transporter

- Always adhere to the correct and safe working practices as per your training and in the specific Vehicle Tie Down instruction, as the risk of injury increases when carrying out the task at height.
- The tie down and untying of vehicles loaded on elevated decks often requires the driver to perform the task whilst in a crouched or stooped posture alongside the loaded vehicle. As a result, the risk of losing balance potentially increases and it is therefore essential that this task is only carried out in a safe location on the deck where side protection is located.
- Never attempt to attach a strap or operate a ratchet while standing on a ladder if you cannot maintain three points of contact. i.e., always have one hand holding a secure point when working.
- Lower the decks where possible so you can work in safety from the ground

Code 4

Working at Height – Securing vehicles while on the transporter

Securing vehicles while on the transporter

- When crossing to the opposite side of the deck to complete the tie down process, avoid open areas between the decks and uneven surfaces. Cross where there are suitable crossing areas covered in non-slip coatings or the gap is narrow enough to be crossed safely.
- Where operations allow, in-fill sections should be fitted to close the gaps between the loading decks to prevent drivers falling through.



- If in doubt or in adverse weather conditions, walk down the deck and cross over at ground level at the rear of the trailer.
- Use the fixed side protection posts as firm anchor points to aid stability and avoid leaning against the side protection cables unnecessarily. Do not use the side protection cables as a lever or “pull up handle”.
- When standing on the floor and securing vehicles on an upper deck from the side, do not climb through the guide cables to operate the ratchet. If your feet slip, your upper body is trapped which leaves your chin and head vulnerable to impact as you fall.

Code 4

Working at Height – Securing vehicles while on the transporter

- Do not hang or tighten tie down hooks / straps etc. on the side protection cables slung between the fixed posts. This can damage the cables and reduce their effectiveness if needed.



Code 5

Working on and around the Transporter

Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Pre-use inspection

Pre-use inspection

Before doing any work on or near a transporter, ensure you are familiar with all aspects of the vehicle. If you are in doubt, seek further training from your line manager on vehicle familiarisation. Ensuring the transporter and its Safe Loading equipment are in a serviceable condition is (at the very least), a daily requirement. Any badly worn or defective items should be defected for rectification or replacement. You cannot expect to remain safe and work to a high standard if the equipment you are using is flawed.

If the transporter is loaded, **Do Not** attempt to climb onto the transporter to check the guide posts and cables. There is a very high risk of falls from height due to the limited space to move and under foot when loaded so this should only be undertaken when the transporter is empty.

The ideal time to inspect the transporter and its equipment is when you are setting the decks for loading. A good check while moving decks and straps into their loading positions will identify any issues before loading begins.

Always check the attached ladders to ensure the rungs are free from grease or oil.

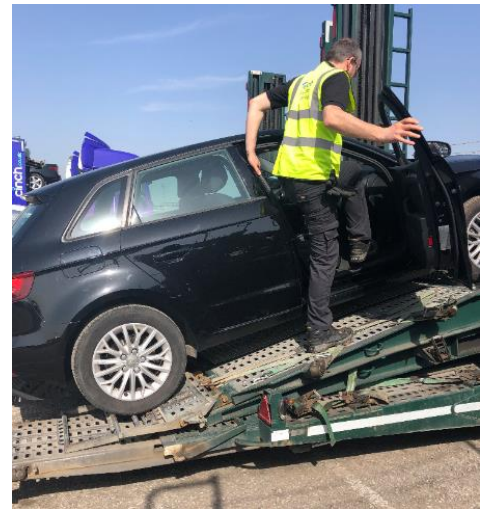
It is far safer, much easier and less time consuming to replace a worn strap or faulty ratchet on an empty deck than when attempting to secure a loaded vehicle.

Code 5

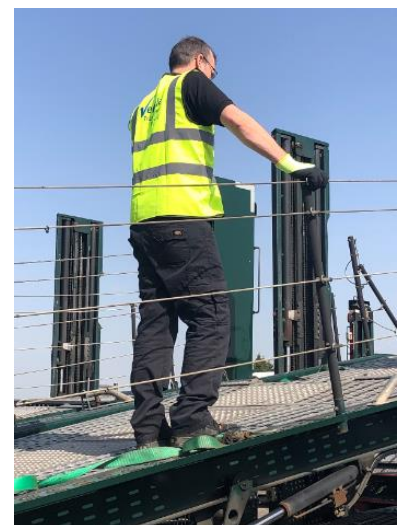
Working on and around the transporter – Accessing and egressing loaded vehicles

Accessing and egressing loaded vehicles

- Take care when getting in or out of a loaded vehicle. Exercise extreme caution and always check for secure footing before moving. Focus on retaining a balanced position at all times with a minimum of three points of contact.



- When opening & closing vehicle doors, always ensure that you do not rely on the door for stability. Always hold on to a firm anchor point with your remaining hand.
- If removed, the ignition key(s) should be in your pocket and not held in your hands. These should be free to hold on to firm anchor points.
- Use the fixed safety posts as firm anchor points to aid stability and avoid leaning against the side protection cables unnecessarily.



Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Accessing and egressing loaded vehicles

- Extra caution to be exercised when working in high winds, wet conditions, and inclement weather.
- Never put your safety at risk if high winds or severe weather conditions make working dangerous.
- Commercial vehicles present the greatest problem with restricted door openings and limited decking alongside the loaded vehicle. If loading commercials, take extreme care at all times and load in the lowest position wherever possible. If it is possible, consider exiting the vehicle by an alternative to the driver's door if it is a safer option. In this situation, take care to avoid inadvertently releasing the handbrake as you access the opposite door. This loading activity may require a specific load trial and/or risk assessment.
- Employees/drivers must prioritise working in a safe and healthy environment. This is backed up by section 44 of the ERA.

Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Slip and Trip hazards

Slip and trip hazards

Manufacturers have made a considerable effort to reduce the risk of falls from height because of slips and trips. Ongoing development and improvements to transporter design have turned towards the safety of the operative. We can see this when comparing transporters from ten years ago with today's versions. Deck in-fill is now commonplace as are robust edge protection systems and the incorporation of grippier surfaces. A positive side effect of galvanised decking is its much grippier under foot and when driving than painted surfaces, so even improvements to a transporter's lifespan can benefit the driver.

On transporters where the deck is not covered in, take care to avoid walking on painted crossmembers to access the adjacent side of the deck. Grip strip or an alternative grippy paint should be applied in such areas to reduce the risk of slips when working.

Ensure that all decks are kept free of potential slip and trip hazards. Looking around you and where you're stepping is not difficult but if you are concentrating on securing, you may not notice the loose chock you're about to step on! This is a very easy, but avoidable way to suffer an injury.



Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Walking under low decks

Walking under low decks

Drivers often have to work in areas where they could bang their heads against hard objects, e.g., when completing walk round checks and when securing via underbody tie downs. Where the risk assessment highlights any activity where this could cause injury, employers can make bump caps available.

- Ensure that the deck is kept free of potential slip and trip hazards e.g., mobile ratchets / wheel chocks, oil & grease.
- Always check that the upper decks are on their locks (ideally above your head height), before attempting to access a lower deck. Never walk or load under an unsupported deck.



Unlocked



Locked

- Before accessing the deck, always check the area directly above your person is clear, to remove the risk of head injury as a result of stepping up into a deck or ram
- Safety goggles may be required on salvage operations if there is a risk of debris falling from the upper deck. Always assess the risk before accessing the deck.

Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Load Security

Load Security

This Load Security guidance for vehicle transporters has been produced by representatives from the vehicle logistics industry, with guidance from DVSA and HSE.

General load security guidance, not specific to vehicle transporters is available from DVSA.

The term 'Lashings' is used throughout to signify straps and ratchets of 3000Kgs minimum, or chains (as used in some salvage operations). A Safe System of Work handbook should be supplied to the driver to highlight any operational points they should be aware of on their specific transporter.

Moving cars and light vans up to 3,500kg on car transporters

A robust load plan should always be completed before loading begins. A load plan is used to ensure the following;

- Driver safety when working on and around the transporter
- A suitable delivery drop order
- The lowest loaded height can be achieved
- Load stability is maximised
- Loading within the GVW and/or axle weights for the specific transporter

Care should be taken when operating transporters as improper loading can easily overload the GVW and/or axle weights. This is especially important on smaller capacity transporters. Always check the kerb weight of each loaded vehicle and ensure the engine compartment is within the transporter's wheelbase.

Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Load Security

3500kgs – Single car transporters

The single car transporter is common in the vehicle logistics industry and attractive to the driver/operator as they currently do not require a tachograph unit to be fitted. WTD rules and regulations must be adhered to along with the [Highway code](#) advice on taking breaks when driving to reduce the risk of driver fatigue.



Load security on a single car is equal to multi vehicle transporters, but the main concern is the limited weight allowance (Payload), that 3500kgs transporters are designed to permit. Most up to date versions with front wheel drive and alloy decks have a design payload less than 1500kgs. A rear wheel drive, twin wheel, steel bodied version's payload is considerably less, so always know the unladen weight of your transporter (weighed with half a tank of fuel, the driver sat in the cab, and any tools/equipment), then check each vehicle you plan on loading to ensure the Gross vehicle Weight is not exceeded.

Four lashings should be used to secure on this open deck.

Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Load Security

Axle weights

Even a loaded vehicle that does not exceed the GVW of the transporter could still exceed the axle weight (front engine car reversed onto the deck for instance). This would now mean that the engine compartment (over 60% of the vehicles weight), would now be behind the rear axle so the gross weight may be ok, but in this instance, the rear axle could be overweight.

Loading anything larger than a medium sized vehicle will see the weights very close to maximum permitted so please be vigilant and CHECK YOUR WEIGHTS.

Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Load Security

Load security

Multi deck transporters – General securing

Each loaded vehicle should be positioned as centrally as possible on the deck. The vehicles weight is now distributed evenly across the width of the transporter, so the driver has enough space to work safely on either side, and to prevent an uneven load from adversely affecting the driving characteristics of the transporter.

Ensuring a good load plan and central load positioning is key to providing maximum stability.

When loading, follow the manufacturer's recommendations. The parking brake and gear or Park should always be engaged once a vehicle is loaded.

Car transporters have a high center of gravity compared to many other types of goods vehicles. To reduce the risk of rollover, always lower loaded upper decks to lower the center of gravity and reduce the risk of roll over and bridge strikes.

The number of chocks and lashings used depends on the load. But as a general guide, there should be a minimum of three separate points of contact between the vehicle and the transporter.

First and Last decks

These positions are at the front and rear of each transporter. For example, the vehicles that would fall from the transporter if they were not secure. These positions require a minimum of four lashings. Chocks can be added but there must be at least four lashing points per vehicle. [DVSA Safe Loading Guidance](#)

Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Load Security

Load security

Flat deck

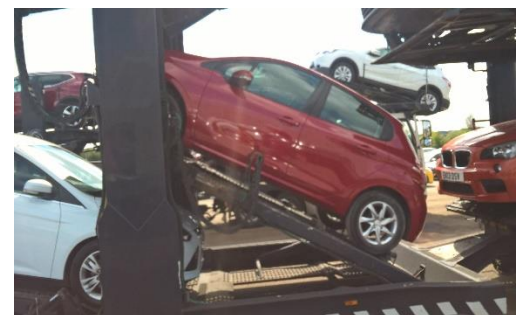
When securing a vehicle to a flat deck, always favour the braking retention when attaching straps. For example, if loading salvage on an inboard deck and using three underbody lashings to structural points, attach two lashings pulling rearwards and one lashing pulling forwards.



This gives double the retention to prevent the loaded vehicle from moving under heavy braking or sudden impact. Two diagonal wheel straps and one chock favoring braking retention is acceptable.

Kick decks at an angle

Loading onto 'Kick decks' where the deck can be raised or dropped at an angle, should see a minimum of two lashings and two chocks. The two chocks should be placed against the incline. If chocks cannot be fitted, an additional lashing should be attached to ensure a minimum three separate points of contact.



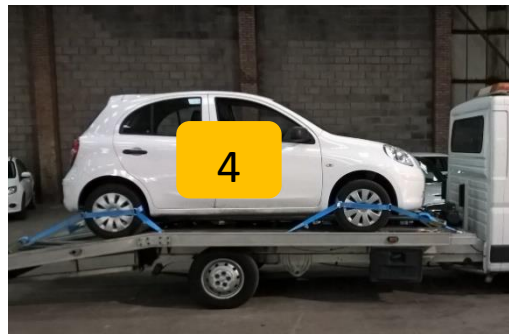
Driver and operative safety are the most important consideration when loading and securing. Some decks (deck five on a 11+ or Ego 538 transporter for example), do not provide the required safe working area to secure to standard 'Kick-up' deck guidelines, so please refer to your Safe System of Work for specific clarification.

Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Load Securing Guidelines

Load securing guidelines

Single car transporter (trailer or rigid vehicle)



Small Multi vehicle rigid



Large Multi vehicle rigid



Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Load Securing Guidelines

Large Multi vehicle combination



How the vehicle is loaded	Amount	Minimum expected securing points
Vehicle on flat deck	2+1	2 Wheels secured by lashings, plus 1 chock in front of a forward-facing wheel or additional lashing on a third wheel
Vehicle on 'Kick deck'	2+2	2 Wheels secured by lashings, plus 2 chocks to the wheels against the incline. Advised additional lashing on a third wheel
First and last vehicles on decks	4	4 Wheels secured by lashings

NB. Salvage operations. Underbody tie down is standard practice on salvage vehicles. Required: 4 straps per loaded vehicle with any loose or damaged items secured appropriately to prevent insecure load.

Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Measuring the loaded height

Measuring the loaded height

Background

Bridge strikes, where vehicles, their loads or equipment collide with bridges, continues to be a significant and recurring problem in the UK. Most of the incidents occur on bridges that form part of the Railway Network. The majority cause frustration to both road and rail users' due to delayed journeys. Bridge strikes however have the potential to cause a train to derail or cause serious structural instability. In addition, a bridge strike may lead to the loss of life or serious injury to the vehicle driver and other people nearby.

There are over 1900 reported Bridge Strikes every year in the UK, with LGVs making up the largest proportion. On an average day, there are 5 bridge strikes. This rises to 16 strikes per day at certain times of the year such as the approach to Christmas.



Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Measuring the loaded height

Safe Working procedures

The vehicle logistics industry has an adopted maximum running height of 16 feet (4.88m). It is recommended to add 3” to any measured height below this as a margin for safety.

Remember, the road could have been re-surfaced, but the bridge marker not changed to show the now, lower height.

- It is a legal requirement for any vehicle over 9’10” (3metres), to be measured and the height displayed inside the cab so that it is clearly visible to the driver.
- Placing your height measuring device (height stick), in an accessible place and the in-cab height marker to hand will make measuring and recording the height of your vehicle far easier and less time consuming.
- Bridge strikes are seldom unavoidable - Plan your route carefully.

**MEASURE AND RECORD THE TRANSPORTER
HEIGHT BEFORE EACH JOURNEY, IT’S THE
LAW.**



Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Bridge Strikes

What can we do to prevent bridge strikes?

1. Ensure vehicle operators' policies and practices support drivers in vehicle height measurement and route planning that takes Low Bridges into account.
2. Provide/attend formal driver training regarding bridge strike prevention.
3. Ensure that drivers know what to do when they are required to change route, for example due to a road closure.
4. Raise awareness of the consequences of a bridge strike and what to do in the event of a bridge strike.
5. Ensure drivers are aware of correct vehicle / trailer loading procedures.
6. Provide and maintain measuring devices for driver use.

Listed below is the number of Network Rail recorded bridge strikes since April 2017. This is just a small snapshot of a larger problem but shows that the Vehicle Logistics Industry would benefit from increased training and understanding of the causes of Bridge strikes.

Year	Number of Strikes
2017	9
2018	20
2019	9
2020 up to October.	15

For further background and guidance please see the following link: [HERE](#)

Code 5

Working on and around the transporter – Bridge Strikes

What action should be taken if a bridge strike occurs?

At a railway bridge

Step 1: Report the bridge strike to the Rail Authority immediately so that trains may be stopped from crossing the bridge.

Telephone the number shown on the identification plate on the bridge.

Do not wait until you return to your depot before reporting the bridge strike.

Step 2: Advise the police using the 999 system.

Any road traffic collision that causes damage to a 3rd party must be reported. Each bridge strike causes damage to a bridge, and must therefore be reported.

Step 3: Report the bridge strike to your employer.

Step 4: Keep the public away and do not move your vehicle.

At any other bridge

Report the bridge strike to the Police using the 999 system and then your employer. Keep the public away and do not move your vehicle.

Network Rail are aiming to recover all costs including train delays and compensation for affected passengers through insurance policies.



Example identification plate at a Network Rail bridge

Code 6

Electric Vehicles (EVs)

The dramatic increase in electric vehicles has far outreached the knowledge of their safe transportation and storage. Although the risks of a catastrophic failure of the battery in a vehicle is extremely low, the impact of such a failure is extremely dangerous and poses a real threat to life if safe systems are not in place. As such, Unite the Union's National Car Council has developed the following guidance as a first step in producing comprehensive safe systems of work for the car delivery industry. This is very much a starting point and we are continuing to work within the industry to ensure all of our members and all road users are safe

Risk of explosion/fire/toxic chemicals.

Although the risk is extremely low, we must be aware of the potential hazards and the appropriate course of action in the event of a catastrophic failure of the EV battery pack.

In regard to the storage, inspection and transportation of EV's the following safety measures should be considered.

- Any damage to the floor of the vehicle, however small, could lead to the battery pack failing. Any damage through loading, unloading or RTC should be reported immediately. When storing an EV with a suspected damaged battery, they should be in an outside quarantine area which is a safe distance away from any other nearby objects. Currently 15 metres is considered a safe distance, however you should always refer to the vehicle manufacturer's guidelines. This distance can be reduced if a suitable fire resistant barrier is placed in between or if they are parked in dedicated fire protected parking areas. Monitor EVs which pose a fire risk for up to 48 hours after an incident.

Code 6

Electric Vehicles (EVs)

- Any signs of smoke or steam from the vehicle is more likely to be a highly toxic and volatile vapour cloud with the potential to poison and explode.
- Suspected fire or potential fire must not be tackled, but if possible and it is safe to do so, the vehicle should be removed to an isolated area, away from buildings, people and other vehicles. (fire extinguishers are of no use)
- Emergency services must be called and, if at a site, a responsible person informed.
- EV's should not be winched or towed.
- Due to the high voltages present in the vehicles, EV's should not be jump started unless full, comprehensive and recognised training has been undertaken.

Consideration should be given to the following recommendations.

- Appropriate risk assessments should be carried out to ensure that all potential risk is eliminated and managed accordingly in conjunction with an up to date Safe System of Work.
- Safety training should be disseminated to all employees engaged in the storage, inspection and transportation of EV's.
- There should be regular and ongoing training to ensure that guidance remains current and relevant.
- Employees must feel able to report any and all incidents without fear of reprisals.

Code 6

Electric Vehicles (EVs)

- Carriers should engage with manufacturers and all interested parties to ensure up to date guidance and processes.
- Signage identifying that the transporter is carrying EV's could be considered to assist emergency services in dealing with any RTC.