

Mobile Off-site Working

Good Practice Guide



IRTE

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SOE (Society of Operations Engineers) is a professional membership organisation representing some 15,000 individuals and companies in engineering. It supports and encourages members throughout their careers and is committed to their ongoing growth and personal development. SOE represents the Professional Sectors IRTE, IPlantE and BES.

Through a network of trustees, industry partners and members, SOE promotes best practice in operational and health and safety initiatives. SOE offers members continuing professional development and support throughout their careers, providing definitive recognition for both achievement and status. The organisation is a Licensed Member of Engineering Council and can nominate members for Engineering Council registration at EngTech, IEng and CEng levels.

IRTE

The Institute of Road Transport Engineers (IRTE) is a Professional Sector of the Society of Operations Engineer (SOE).

IRTE, one of the most respected names in UK transport, was founded in 1944 and is recognised as an impartial voice of the industry. It encourages high standards of excellence with an emphasis on safety in operation, demonstrated by its research and education programme for members and industry.

IRTE members come from a wide variety of transport-related roles including apprentices, technicians, workshop managers, fleet engineers, transport managers, and company directors.

IRTE publishes an industry-leading technical journal, *Transport Engineer*, known for its incisive coverage of key industry issues, news analysis and informed comment.

Recognising the need for those working in the industry to prove their competence, IRTE pioneered the independent irtec licensing scheme for bus and coach technicians, and IRTE Workshop Accreditation for passenger carrying and commercial vehicle workshops.

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For more information about IRTE technical activities please contact technical@soe.org.uk

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Foreword

This Best Practice Guide aims to provide guidance to those working at locations other than their own company workshop, such as locations overseen by external organisations.

This guidance has been created to raise the standards of the mobile off-site working side of the road transport industry, as the standards between on and off-site working can differ wildly due to the location, weather and many other external factors. The IRTE Technical Committee believed that a guide would be an important step into ensuring that the standards of those technicians within a workshop would not be lost should they be mobile.

Mobile off-site working involves an employee visiting an external site in order to maintain or inspect either their own or another organisation's vehicles. The standard practices of one organisation may be different to those of another; therefore, this guide aims to provide the most relevant guidance to employees working off-site in order for them to comply with current safety standards.

Mobile off-site working may also include working without cover or outside of a workshop environment. In these instances, working conditions must allow for the guidelines contained herein to be adhered to.

IRTE is pleased to have had the support of Ryder and Bullwell Trailer Solutions during the production of this guidance. With mobile practices having been at the forefront of both businesses, their knowledge and input to develop and establish best practice for engineers conducting off-site working has been a great help, and ensures that this guidance can provide the best advice for off-site and mobile technicians.

The person

Because an employee needs to be able to assess aspects of the job such as the environment, site conditions, and available equipment, IRTE recommends that anyone working off-site should be trained to a suitable level and be proven competent via an independent assessment (e.g. irtec, C&G Unit 213).

From the employee's arrival, all site procedures and conditions must be taken into consideration. The technician should ensure that they register their presence upon arrival and receive permission, from management, to work on the site (e.g. Permit to Work).

Considering the task at hand

Both the employer and employee should consider the requirements of a particular situation and job, which will affect what tools/equipment are required, whether the job can be completed safely off-site, and whether the employee will be able to comfortably complete the job in a given period of time.

Employers should also ensure that employees have knowledge of and training in the specific vehicle or trailer that they will be working with.

Tools and equipment

Equipment provided to an employee should allow them to complete the task safely and correctly, and should be of the same standard as those found in a workshop setting. Personal Protective Equipment should be included as a default from the employer.

Other equipment that should be considered includes:

- First aid box
- Fire extinguisher
- Personal communication devices
- Washing facilities

Oil spills/contamination

The working site should be left in a clean and tidy condition when a job is concluded, regardless of its initial state. Therefore, spillage containment and cleaning equipment should be provided to the employee.

Location of job

Upon arrival at a job, an employee must feel confident that it is safe to work on the vehicle in question.

1. The location of the vehicle should be considered first: Is access to the vehicle limited anywhere? Could currently vacant space be taken up by another vehicle whilst the job is taking place?
2. The potential for impact by other vehicles should also be considered. Prior to starting the job, the employee should either block the vehicle using another vehicle or safety cones; it is also imperative that a safety zone is created as the sound of an approaching vehicle or other hazard may not be immediately obvious.
3. The environment is a key consideration; adverse weather may pose a risk of injury to the employee or others. The type of ground the vehicle sits on is also important - if it is unstable, the risk of injury could be increased. In addition, the quality and ability to work satisfactorily may be jeopardised.
4. Before any work is undertaken, a signed risk assessment should be provided by the employer (via either a laminated assessment sheet or contained within the specific job sheet) and completed by the employee.

Dynamic risk assessment

An employee would be expected to conduct a risk assessment upon arrival at a work site. However, this would not take into consideration potential changes to the site whilst the job is being undertaken.

It is therefore recommended that a Dynamic Risk Assessment be composed by the company to assist the employee.

Examples of what should be included in a dynamic risk assessment:

- Vehicle location
- Surface type (hard-standing, gravel, soft ground, etc.)
- Weather conditions
- Whether lighting is adequate
- Whether space available is adequate
- Other vehicle movements (with considerations for a safe working area)
- Power supply
- Security of vehicle position
- Preparation of workspace
- Possibility of vehicle key removal (ie. prevention of vehicle/trailer being moved during the job)
- Provisions for blocking the vehicle using another vehicle or safety cones (including use of hazards/beacon lights)
- Any on-site assistance needed
- Provision for tasks that cannot be carried out individually (e.g. brake operation, steering, manual handling)
- Communication process

Working at height

In instances where an employee may have to work at height, it may be appropriate to request assistance from the work site, or request that the vehicle is moved to an alternative workshop.

Quality control

To ensure that any mobile off-site working is of adequate quality, the same quality control procedures and working standards as those of a regular workshop should be applied. To ensure this, the employer should regularly check a percentage of the jobs undertaken, both internal and external.

Statement from IRTE

IRTE believes that the quality of mobile off-site working should be the same as in a dedicated workshop, and that responsibility for this lies with the on-site employee.

If this cannot be achieved, the employee has the right to decide on their ability to complete or carry out the job to the required standard, and provide feedback to the tasking organisation.

Appendix A – Example of a dynamic risk assessment

Date:	Customer Name/ Location:	Vehicle/Trailer Type:	Technician Name:
Time:	Task to be completed:	Vehicle/Trailer Reg./ Number:	Technician Signature:

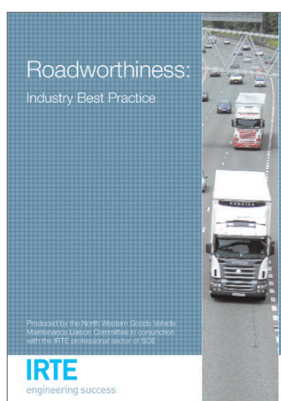
Guide: NEVER carry out a task you believe may compromise your safety or the safety of others. Always report any safety concerns before commencement of any work.

Site – Site specific procedures	Y	N	N/A	Comments
1. Has the on-site permit to work been issued & authorisation granted (site dependent)?				
2. Have site rules & regulations been communicated prior to commencement of task? (Fire emergency/pedestrian walkways etc.).				
Workplace environment (The following questions must be answered 'YES' before work is authorised to commence)				
1. If working on powered vehicles, has the control of vehicle keys been completed?				
2. Is the service vehicle positioned to prevent unauthorised vehicle drive off or trailer coupling? If not achievable are cones and signage placed at the front of the vehicle or trailer?				
3. Are the service vehicle warning beacons & hazard lights activated?				
4. Is the working area protected from other traffic & pedestrian routes with warning cones or safety barriers?				
5. Is the vehicle/trailer parking brake engaged correctly & wheel chocks in place?				
6. Are ground conditions generally suitable? (Firm/level/ generally good condition/free from debris)				
7. Is the lighting suitable? (Adequate lighting within working environment or with additional task lighting if required)				
8. Do the local weather conditions impact on the task to be done? (Snow, ice, rain or wind speed.)				

Appendix A – Example of a dynamic risk assessment

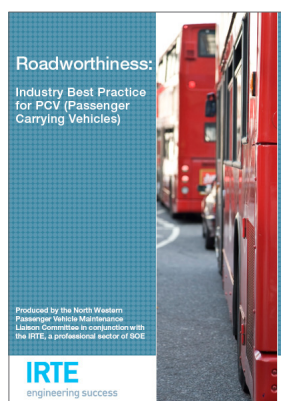
Working at height (If tasks include working at height, the following questions must be answered 'YES' before work is authorised to commence)	Y	N	N/A	Comments
1. Are the ground conditions suitable for aircraft steps/ ladders or step ladders? (i.e. firm/level/good condition/free from debris)				
2. Are aircraft steps or mobile platform (not mobile scaffolding) available?				
(If 'NO' questions 3 to 5 for ladders & step ladders must be answered 'YES')				
3. Are ladders or step ladders suitable for task, if aircraft steps are not available?				
4. Is the duration of the task < 30 minutes & light work?				
5. Is the working height task < 6 metres?				
Lifting vehicles (If tasks involve lifting vehicles, questions 1 & 2 must be answered 'YES' before work is authorised to commence)				
1. Are the ground conditions suitably firm, stable & level for the use of vehicle lifting jacks & axle stands?				
2. Are the lifting jacks & axle stands free from defects?				
Hot work (If tasks involve hot work, questions 1 to 3 must be answered 'YES' before work is authorised to commence)				
1. Has on-site hot work been authorised by the customer and where applicable a hot work permit been issued?				
2. Are the fire extinguishers suitable for the potential type of fire as detailed in (HSW27)?				
3. Is the workplace ventilation suitable & adequate for the task?				

IRTE publications



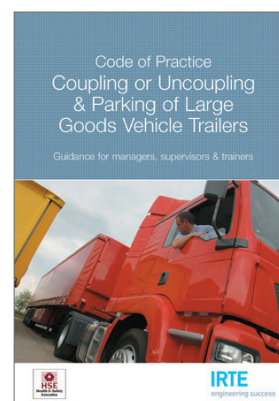
Roadworthiness: Industry Best Practice

This guide is intended to assist vehicle operators and managers, regardless of fleet size to improve their vehicle maintenance controls and standards.



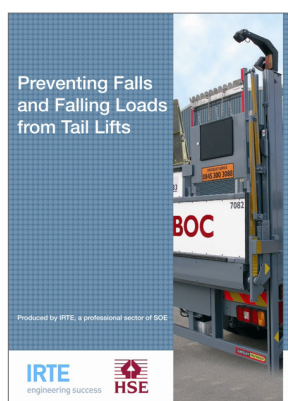
Roadworthiness: Industry Best Practice for PCV

Produced with leading industry bodies, this guide gives advice on best practice so all passenger carrying vehicle operators can improve their vehicle maintenance controls and standards.



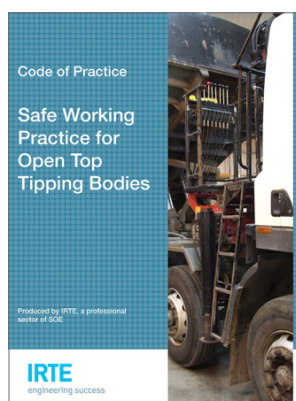
Coupling or Uncoupling & Parking of Large Goods Vehicle Trailers

This IRTE code of practice is aimed at managers, supervisors and trainers but has good advice for everyone who has responsibility for the safety of large goods vehicles and drivers.



Preventing Falls and Falling Loads from Tail Lifts

Produced by the members of a Tail Lift Users Group, which included tail lift operators, manufacturers and HSE, to provide guidance for the prevention of falls and falling loads from tail lifts.



Safe Working Practice for Open Top Tipping Bodies

This Code of Practice provides guidance on the law, explains why accidents occur, and illustrates the need for procedures to ensure accidents involving tipping vehicles do not occur.



Wheel Security - A best practice guide

This guide explains the mechanisms of wheel loss and provides helpful best practice guidance to assist those specifying and maintaining commercial vehicles to reduce wheel loss incidents.

Sponsors



As the UK's trusted fleet partner, with 29 locations and a fleet of more than 22,500 trucks and trailers, Ryder supports its customers nationwide with bespoke commercial vehicle contract hire and rental solutions, maintenance, 24/7 in house breakdown assistance, and approved used vehicle sales.

Backed by the strength and resources of Ryder System Inc., a Fortune 500 provider of leading-edge transportation solutions worldwide, Ryder provides the choice, reliability, uptime and compliance performance that today's fleet customers demand.



Part of the Ryder Group, Bullwell Trailer Solutions is one of the UK's largest providers of mobile repair and maintenance solutions for trailers, moving decks, tail lifts and powered vehicles.

Through its mobile service division, Bullwell is able to reduce its clients' carbon emissions by as much as 97%, as well as making significant economic savings and reducing customers' health and safety risk.

Currently, Bullwell looks after more than 5,000 trailers, with mobile engineers located across the UK from Glasgow to Exeter.

Bullwell also boasts a purpose built Double Deck Trailer facility and an on-site ATF at its Lichfield headquarters.



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