
HEAVY VEHICLE TESTING TESTING SPECIFICATIONS

**Includes Light, Medium, Heavy Rigid
and Heavy Combination**

DIER

Land Transport Safety

Registration and Licensing Branch



Tasmania

HEAVY VEHICLE TESTING COMPETENCY STANDARDS

Notice to Applicants

A test result of "Unsuccessful" will be recorded if an applicant does not successfully fulfill **any one component**.

How the Test is Conducted

The test will result in an "unsuccessful" outcome and may be discontinued (at the discretion of the Testing Officer) if any of the following occur:

- In the judgement of the Testing Officer, is not capable of taking the test
- Applicant fails to provide a current licence
- Vehicle is not suitable or breaks down during the test
- Applicant is unable/refuses to attempt any part of the test
- Applicant offers a bribe or inducement
- The Testing Officer is presented with a situation that would not normally be present, that adversely affects the authenticity, fairness, reliability or validity of the test
- Fails to look and signal before changing lanes
- Disobeys and road rules that immediately or potentially threaten the safety of any vehicle or pedestrian traffic (eg fail to stop at stop sign)
- Action requiring the Testing Officer to control the vehicle
- Driving over kerb contrary to regulations
- Lack of satisfactory vehicle control
- Not obeying regulatory signs or signals
- Improper action causing collision or near collision of vehicles
- Failure to wear seatbelt when fitted to vehicle
- Exceeding speed limits

How to Use this Document

Applicants are required to successfully complete the tasks listed.

Each element is compulsory. Some of the individual performance components may be tested by skill demonstration and / or oral explanation, depending on test conditions.

Italicised text in boxes is given for reference purposes only. (Italicised text is not tested.)

HEAVY VEHICLE TESTING COMPETENCY STANDARDS

COMPONENT

TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

1. Pre-Departure

1.1 Appropriate pre-departure check:

Checks:

- 1.1.1 for any possible fluid leaks
- 1.1.2 that vehicle sufficiently fuelled
- 1.1.3 that brakes are fully applied, and gearbox is disengaged
- 1.1.4 that oil, air and alternator warning lights / gauges operate sufficiently
- 1.1.5 windscreen for damage and cleanliness
- 1.1.6 tyre wear and inflation
- 1.1.7 that rear parking, indicator, brake and reversing lights work satisfactorily
- 1.1.8 serviceability and security of mirrors
- 1.1.9 that windscreen wipers and washers work satisfactorily
- 1.1.10 that horn works satisfactorily
- 1.1.11 If vehicles GVM is greater than 12 Tonne check that portable warning devices are in vehicle

NOTE:

A pre-departure check procedure ascertains that the vehicle is in a fit, reliable and safe condition, via:

- *visual inspection*
- *manual inspections*

1.2 Appropriate load security:

Ensures:

- 1.2.1 serviceability of all latches, lockers, stowage compartments and doors
- 1.2.2 security of the load and lashings

NOTE:

Refer to National Road Transport Commission Load Restraint Guide for further information.

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COMPONENT

TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

1.3 Appropriate departure preparation:

- 1.3.1 starts engine according to manufacturer's specification
- 1.3.2 ensures adequate air pressure has been reached if applicable
- 1.3.3 fits the seat belt securely
- 1.3.4 adjusts mirrors for maximum vision
- 1.3.5 if undertaking Heavy Combination test, tug-tests the trailer to confirm proper coupling, then re-applies prime-mover / vehicle park brake

NOTE - 1.3.1:

A procedure is followed that complements the characteristics of the vehicle and that should enable the engine to start, run and continue to run.

- *The vehicle remains stationary and secure throughout the starting operation*
- *An appropriate contingency is used if the engine fails to start the first time or to continue to run after testing*

NOTE - 1.3.4:

Maximum vision is when:

View into side mirrors skims the side of the vehicle and takes in 50 / 50 horizon and road when the vehicle is on a level surface

NOTE - 1.3.5:

Visually check the completed coupling of trailer connection device.

Fifth wheel or Ringfeeder whichever is applicable...

...

1.4 Braking system identification:

Please note: knowledge of braking system on test vehicle will be tested by oral explanation.

- 1.4.1 confirms braking system requirements
- 1.4.2 confirms appropriate usage of braking system

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NOTE - 1.4.1:

Confirms means:

- the driver can identify the various braking systems used on test vehicle (eg. exhaust and engine brakes) and describe how each is activated

NOTE - 1.4.2:

Appropriate usage means:

- the applicant can identify appropriate locations/situations for use of each type of braking system (eg. engine retarders should not be used in built up areas)

Example:

Whenever driving through a town or a small community of houses especially if you are going down hill, rounding a bend or pulling up to the lights:

Turn off your engine brake or use it only if it's absolutely necessary

Reduce speed so that you don't need to use the engine brake

2. Moving Off

2.1 Appropriate observations:

GENERAL NOTE: Vehicle is moved off with co-ordinated inputs of the following five testing specification descriptions. Testing specification descriptions may be repeated throughout the moving off procedure.

Checks:

- 2.1.1 mirrors and observes for other road users, and responds accordingly and in a timely manner
- 2.1.2 for hazards and obstructions in front, behind, beside, below and above the vehicle, and responds accordingly and in a timely manner

NOTE - 2.1.1:

Responds accordingly means:

- performed with care and precision

Timely manner means:

- is able to respond and complete manoeuvres in a smooth and steady manner; or
- does not have to employ contingencies as a result of late planning or decision making.

2.2 Appropriate signaling:

- 2.2.1 uses indicator to signal intention to move

2.3 Correct brake release:

- 2.3.1 releases the service brakes and engages the clutch to the friction point

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NOTE - 2.3.1:

Friction point means:

- The point where on releasing the clutch, a small amount of power is transferred to the rear wheels.

2.4 Prevention of roll back of vehicle:

2.4.1 accelerates smoothly, ensuring the vehicle does not roll back on clutch engagement

NOTE - 2.4.1:

Smoothly means:

- incremental movements, where the result does not unsettle vehicle occupants, stability, load, cause damage to drive train or trailer connection device.

2.5 Appropriate gear selections:

2.5.1 fully engages the clutch, using minimal throttle opening

2.5.2 before selecting the lowest appropriate gear, holds vehicle stationary by service brakes

NOTE 2.5.1:

Minimal throttle opening means the engine is not over revving or labouring

3. General Gear Changing

3.1 Appropriate gear use:

3.1.1 smoothly selects and engages the appropriate gear for the speed and driving conditions

NOTE - 3.1.1:

Smoothly means:

- incremental movements, where the result does not unsettle vehicle occupants, stability, load, cause damage to drive train or trailer connection device.

Selection should be completed (completed means the clutch pedal has been released) prior to the situation in which it will be required.

The double de-clutching method is to be used if the vehicle is fitted with a constant mesh gearbox.

If a clutch brake is fitted and the vehicle is moving, the clutch is not fully depressed when changing gear.

Appropriate gear means the engine is not over revving or laboring.

Gears need not be selected in numerical sequence.

Gear changes are made primarily while the vehicle is travelling in a straight line. During a curve, gears should not be changed while actively turning the steering wheel.

HEAVY VEHICLE TESTING COMPETENCY STANDARDS

| COMPONENT | TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION |
|--|--|
| <p>4. General Observation</p> <p>(excluding turning and lane changing)</p> | <p>4.1 Appropriate environment scanning and planning:</p> <p>4.1.1 drives safely and smoothly</p> <p>4.1.2 maintains observations of other road users, vehicle position and prevailing conditions (especially through the use of mirrors), and responds accordingly and in a timely manner</p> <p>4.1.3 checks for hazards in front, behind, beside, below and above the vehicle, and responds accordingly and in a timely manner</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>NOTE- 4.1.1:</i> Smoothly means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incremental movements, where the result does not unsettle vehicle occupants, stability, load, cause damage to drive train or trailer connection device. <p><i>NOTE - 4.1.2 & 4.1.3:</i> Timely means the applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is able to respond and complete manoeuvres in a smooth and steady manner; or • does not have to employ contingencies as a result of late planning or decision making </div> <p>4.2 Appropriate use of warning systems:</p> <p>4.2.1 continuously monitors vehicle warning systems to minimize unsafe operating conditions</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>NOTE - 4.2.1:</i> Refer to manufacturer's specifications for further information.</p> </div> |
| <p>5. Steering Technique</p> <p>(excluding turning and reversing)</p> | <p>5.1 Maintains directional control:</p> <p>5.1.1 maintains the vehicle within lane boundaries</p> <p>5.1.2 steers the vehicle, taking due care of the effects of road cambers</p> <p>5.1.3 maintains constant direction without wandering, crossing lanes or centre lines</p> |

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GENERAL NOTE:

Steering is applied smoothly and consistently with the desired path.

Smoothly means:

- *incremental movements, where the result does not unsettle vehicle occupants, stability, load, cause damage to drive train or trailer connection device.*
- *the vehicle is steered with both hands unless operating the controls. Hands should be outside the wheel with palms on the rim*
- *pressure of grip is adjusted consistent with the required steering effort*
- *when steering is applied the applicant should maintain a posture enabling effective control and operation of the vehicle*

In straight line driving an accurate course is maintained.

An accurate course means:

- *one that maintains a legal road position, without adversely affecting people, vehicles or property*
- *one that allows for cornering lines and sweep paths, without adversely affecting people, vehicles or property.*

Steering brake and accelerator input are adjusted according to variations in road surface conditions.

- *Appropriate adjustments will be recognised by smooth performance and an ability of the vehicle to handle significant changes in speed or direction.*

Sweep path describes the rear wheels of the vehicle taking a shorter path around the turn than do the front wheels.

6. Turning Left or Right

6.1 Appropriate vehicle positioning:

- 6.1.1 controls and positions the vehicle appropriately when approaching turns
- 6.1.2 demonstrates safe and legal road positions before, during and after turns
- 6.1.3 positions the vehicle to assist safe actions of other road users with respect to overtaking
- 6.1.4 steers smoothly, maintaining vehicle control through turns

NOTE - 6.1.4:

Smoothly means:

- *incremental movements, where the result does not unsettle vehicle occupants, stability, load, cause damage to drive train or trailer connection device.*

6.2 Appropriate speed / gears use:

- 6.2.1 applies brakes smoothly and on time, maintaining safe speeds to suit the environment
- 6.2.2 smoothly selects the appropriate gear for turns prior to commencing the turning process
- 6.2.3 applies and maintains power throughout the turning process, especially to counteract trailer shunting

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COMPONENT

TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

NOTE - 6.2.1:

Smoothly means:

- incremental movements, where the result does not unsettle vehicle occupants, stability, load, cause damage to drive train or trailer connection device

On time means the applicant:

- is able to respond and complete manoeuvres in a smooth and steady manner; or
- does not have to employ contingencies as a result of late planning or decision making.

Appropriate gear means the engine is not over revving or labouring.

Trailer shunting means:

- Where the trailer pushes the towing vehicle.

6.3 Appropriate indications:

- 6.3.1 provides sufficient warning to other road users by indicating in a timely and accurate manner

NOTE - 6.3.1:

Timely means:

- is able to respond and complete manoeuvres in a smooth and steady manner; or
- does not have to employ contingencies as a result of late planning or decision making.

Accurate means:

- performed with care and precision.

6.4 Appropriate observations:

- 6.4.1 observes and responds accordingly to all other road users, before, during and after turns
- 6.4.2 uses mirrors to monitor the vehicle's position when cornering

NOTE 6.4.1:

Responds accordingly means:

- performed with care and precision.

NOTE 6.4.2:

Before vehicle is turning, mirrors are checked, signals are used, speed is adjusted with required braking and appropriate gear changes are completed.

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| COMPONENT | TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION |
|-------------------------|---|
| 7. Descents | <p data-bbox="483 331 948 365">7.1 Appropriate use of brakes:</p> <p data-bbox="483 449 1166 478">7.1.1 uses brakes smoothly, and for appropriate periods only</p> <p data-bbox="483 491 1471 546">7.1.2 activates the auxiliary brake (engine, exhaust or tail shaft retarder) before commencement of descent</p> <p data-bbox="483 562 1471 617">7.1.3 applies brakes smoothly and on time, maintaining safe speeds to suit the environment</p> <div data-bbox="565 667 1479 940" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><p data-bbox="574 676 773 697">NOTE - 7.1.1 & 7.1.3:</p><p data-bbox="574 709 724 730"><i>Smoothly means:</i></p><ul data-bbox="574 743 1471 793" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="574 743 1471 793">• <i>incremental movements, where the result does not unsettle vehicle occupants, stability, load, cause damage to drive train or trailer connection device.</i><p data-bbox="574 806 698 827">NOTE - 7.1.3</p><p data-bbox="574 840 828 861"><i>On time means the applicant:</i></p><ul data-bbox="574 873 1354 936" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="574 873 1354 894">• <i>is able to respond and complete manoeuvres in a smooth and steady manner; or</i><li data-bbox="574 907 1354 936">• <i>does not have to employ contingencies as a result of late planning or decision making</i></div> <p data-bbox="483 1016 1136 1050">7.2 Correct torque / RPMs for selected gear:</p> <p data-bbox="483 1134 987 1163">7.2.1 does not over rev or labour the engine</p> <p data-bbox="483 1281 786 1314">7.3 Gear selection:</p> <p data-bbox="483 1398 1471 1453">7.3.1 selects the appropriate gear for the degree and conditions of the descent, before commencing the descent</p> <div data-bbox="565 1507 1479 1638" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><p data-bbox="574 1516 704 1537">NOTE - 7.3.1:</p><p data-bbox="574 1549 1159 1570"><i>An appropriate gear is one that will hold the vehicle to a safe speed.</i></p><p data-bbox="574 1583 1471 1633"><i>Adjustment of speed must not allow gear selection to unsettle the vehicle or cause excessive engine revolutions.</i></p></div> |
| 8. Lane Changing | <p data-bbox="483 1709 1013 1743">8.1 Checks road ahead and behind:</p> <p data-bbox="483 1827 1305 1856">8.1.1 assesses adequate clear road distance, maintaining "space cushions"</p> <p data-bbox="483 1869 1065 1898">8.1.2 checks for other possible overtaking vehicles</p> |

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COMPONENT

TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

NOTE - 8.1.1:

"Space cushion" is the area:

- in front of the vehicle
- behind the vehicle
- to the sides of the vehicle
- overhead the vehicle
- below the vehicle

"Space cushions" allow room to manoeuvre or swerve slightly if required. A "space cushion" should be maintained at all times for safety reasons.

Environment includes: road users, loads, weather, traffic conditions, road conditions, special events.

Special events could include: emergency vehicles, obstructions, road works, significant changes in road surface, bridges, animals.

8.2 Appropriate indicating:

8.2.1 changes lanes safely, by indicating in a timely and accurate manner

NOTE - 8.2.1:

Timely and accurate manner means the applicant:

- is able to respond and complete manoeuvres in a smooth and steady manner; or
- does not have to employ contingencies as a result of late planning or decision making.

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COMPONENT

TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

8.3 Avoids "cutting in" and obstructing traffic:

- 8.3.1 provides sufficient warning to other road users by indicating in a timely and accurate manner
- 8.3.2 maintains adequate "space cushions" before, during and after lane changes

NOTE - 8.3.1:

Timely and accurate manner means the applicant:

- is able to respond and complete manoeuvres in a smooth and steady manner; or
- does not have to employ contingencies as a result of late planning or decision making.

NOTE - 8.3.2:

"Space cushion" is the area:

- in front of the vehicle
- behind the vehicle
- to the sides of the vehicle
- overhead the vehicle
- below the vehicle.

"Space cushions" allow room to manoeuvre or swerve slightly if required. A "space cushion" should be maintained at all times for safety reasons.

Environment includes: road users, loads, weather, traffic conditions, road conditions, special events

Special events could include: emergency vehicles, obstructions, road works, significant changes in road surface, bridges, animals.

9. Driving Technique

9.1 Maintains safe speed in relation to environment:

GENERAL NOTE:

The accelerator is:

- applied and released smoothly to produce desired change of speed
- used to maintain a selected speed
- used to counteract effects of gradient

Progressive acceleration is used in corners and bends.

Progressive acceleration means:

- to balance the vehicle so that it is neither accelerating nor decelerating, but keeps the trailer tight and ensures the trailer is not pushing the prime mover, while turning the corner or negotiating a bend
- on a level road the applicant will be able to maintain a set speed for the required period by fine adjustments to the position of the accelerator pedal.

Smoothly means:

- incremental movements, where the result does not unsettle vehicle occupants, stability, load, cause damage to drive train or trailer connection device.

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TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

- 9.1.1 maintains safe “space cushions”
- 9.1.2 maintains safe and adequate speeds for the environment, including road users, loads, weather, traffic and road conditions

NOTE - 9.1.1:

"Space cushion" is the area:

- *in front of the vehicle*
- *behind the vehicle*
- *to the sides of the vehicle*
- *overhead the vehicle*
- *below the vehicle.*

"Space cushions" allow room to manoeuvre or swerve slightly if required. A "space cushion" should be maintained at all times for safety reasons.

Environment includes: road users, loads, weather, traffic conditions, road conditions, special events

Special events could include: emergency vehicles, obstructions, road works, significant changes in road surface, bridges, animals

9.2 Environmental awareness:

Please note: this component will be tested by skill demonstration and oral explanation.

- 9.2.1 notes and complies with regulatory signs and road markings
- 9.2.2 drives safely and smoothly, while maintaining observation of other road users, vehicle position and prevailing conditions, especially through the use of mirrors
- 9.2.3 positions the vehicle to assist safe actions of other road users with respect to overtaking

NOTE - 9.2.1:

The applicant will be asked to recall regulatory signs and/or road markings at various times during the test. On immediately passing a regulatory sign or road marking, the Testing Officer may ask the applicant to recall the regulatory sign or road marking.

NOTE - 9.2.3:

Actions do not cause alterations in normal driving behavior of other road users. observes and the applicant pays appropriate regard to advisory signs.

Normal driving behavior means:

- *other drivers and road users [complying with road rules] should not have to brake, accelerate, change direction or otherwise change their behavior significantly to accommodate the applicants actions*
- *cooperation with other road users.*

Situations requiring cooperation would include merging, lane changing, vehicles entering traffic [especially in busy conditions], assisting others when they have 'got it wrong' [eg. attempting a u-turn without sufficient room], waiting for pedestrian stragglers on crossings.

Overtaking in this case applies to overtaking on the off side on a two-way section of road.

Head lights are used effectively. In poor light conditions during the day, lights should be turned on to make the vehicle more conspicuous.

HEAVY VEHICLE TESTING COMPETENCY STANDARDS

COMPONENT

TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

9.3 Effective braking and gear integration:

9.3.1 braking and gear selection are integrated efficiently as required

Integrated efficiently [overlapping of brakes and gear change] means:

- *the action is primarily conducted when the vehicle is travelling straight*
- *vehicle occupants / loads are not unsettled*
- *gear selection is completed within a reasonable time*
- *no significant increase in engine revolutions is noticed when gear selection is complete*
- *the transmission is engaged prior to any steering being applied.*

10. Reversing

10.1 Correct reversing practices:

10.1.1 checks for hazards and obstructions in front, behind, beside, below and above the vehicle

10.1.2 performs a left turn reverse into designated area

10.1.3 reverses in a straight line, at least 2 lengths of vehicle

10.1.4 if undertaking Heavy Combination test initiates direction of trailer path correctly, then adjusts the vehicle to achieve its correct path

NOTE - 10.1.2:

The Testing Officer will inform the applicant of the location of the designated area.

10.2 Integration of use of mirrors and windows:

Uses mirrors:

10.2.1 while reversing prime-mover / rear window straight in front of the trailer

10.2.2 to maintain visibility beside, behind and above the vehicle

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COMPONENT

TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

11. Braking

11.1 Appropriate use of brakes:

- 11.1.1 uses brakes smoothly, at appropriate distances, and for short periods only while travelling straight

NOTE - 11.1.1:

Smoothly means:

- incremental movements, the result does not unsettle vehicle occupants, stability, load, cause damage to drive train, king pin or its coupling.

NOTE:

Braking is performed efficiently. Efficiently means:

- brakes are used as the primary means of slowing the vehicle
- brakes are used primarily while the vehicle is travelling straight
- the best road surface option is selected for braking
- engine braking is used to supplement vehicle brakes when descending hills
- skidding does not occur
- variations are made to the brake pressure according to changes in the road surface
- variations are made to the brake pressure according to load
- trailer brakes are not used instead of the service brakes
- auxiliary brakes or speed retarders are used to increase braking safety and reduce brake wear.

Desired stopping point is reached accurately

- Brake pedal pressure is modulated to achieve a steady stop and the vehicle becomes stationary less than one metre before the desired stopping point.

11.2 Integrated use of braking systems

- 11.2.1 applies service / auxiliary brakes smoothly and on time, to achieve safe speeds and to stop, to suit the environment

NOTE - 11.2.1:

Smoothly means:

- incremental movements, the result does not unsettle vehicle occupants, stability, load, cause damage to drive train, king pin or its coupling

On time means the applicant:

- is able to respond and complete manoeuvres in a smooth and steady manner; or
- does not have to employ contingencies as a result of late planning or decision making

HEAVY VEHICLE TESTING COMPETENCY STANDARDS

| COMPONENT | TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION |
|--|---|
| 12. Parking and Securing | <p data-bbox="483 331 1015 367">12.1 Appropriate vehicle shut-down:</p> <p data-bbox="483 451 1128 483">12.1.1 parks the vehicle in neutral with park brake applied</p> <p data-bbox="483 493 1079 525">12.1.2 secures the vehicle by switching the engine off</p> <p data-bbox="483 651 1015 686">12.2 Meets regulatory requirements:</p> <p data-bbox="483 770 1412 802">12.2.1 parks vehicle in various locations, in accordance with regulatory requirements</p> |
| 13. Uncoupling (Combination vehicle only) | <p data-bbox="483 982 868 1018">13.1 Selects suitable area:</p> <p data-bbox="483 1096 1437 1127"><i>Please note: this component will be tested by skill demonstration and oral explanation.</i></p> <p data-bbox="483 1138 1299 1169">13.1.1 selects an appropriate area to safely conduct the required procedure</p> <p data-bbox="483 1180 1469 1236">13.1.2 conducts a visual inspection to ensure the ground upon which the vehicle is parked is level</p> <p data-bbox="483 1247 1445 1278">13.1.3 checks that the ground is firm enough to support the trailer landing gear and load</p> <p data-bbox="483 1362 917 1398">13.2 Appropriate preparation</p> <p data-bbox="483 1482 852 1514">13.2.1 correctly secures vehicles</p> <p data-bbox="483 1524 1031 1556">13.2.2 appropriately activates trailer landing gear</p> <p data-bbox="483 1566 1153 1598">13.2.3 disconnects air hoses and electrical cables as required</p> <p data-bbox="483 1608 1396 1640">13.2.4 prepares trailer connection device to enable successful uncoupling procedure</p> |

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NOTE - 13.2.1:

- *If vehicle is not fitted with maxi brakes, places chocks on the trailer front axle group.*

NOTE - 13.2.2:

- *Lowers landing gear until supports are firmly in contact with the ground / base plates*
- *Secures the landing handle.*

NOTE - 13.2.3:

- *Safely disconnects air hoses and electrical cables*
- *Stows hoses and cables securely on the prime mover / truck or other designated location).*

NOTE - 13.2.4:

- *Engages release handle of Fifth Wheel Coupling / Ringfeder Connection.*

13.3 Correctly moves vehicle forward

- 13.3.1 completes the procedure with the rear of the prime mover underneath the front of the trailer (for fifth wheel coupling type)

NOTE - 13.3.1:

- *Releases the prime mover/ truck parking brake, then slowly drives forward in a straight line.*

Coupling

14. (Combination Vehicleonly)

14.1 Appropriate preparation:

- 14.1.1 positions prime mover / truck and ensures that the trailer is secure
- 14.1.2 conducts a visual inspection of trailer connection device, and assesses serviceability. (fifth wheel coupling and trailer skid plate assemblies or Ringfeder assembly, whichever applies)
- 14.1.3 prepares trailer connection device and trailer to enable successful coupling procedure

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NOTE – 14.1.1:

- Stops prime mover / truck just in front of the trailer and applies the park brake
- Confirms that the prime mover / truck and trailer are aligned
- If vehicle is not fitted with maxi brakes, chocks the front and back of the trailer wheels on both sides
- If vehicle is fitted with maxi brakes, ensures spring brakes are on.

NOTE – 14.1.2:

- Checks for damage to the trailer connection device (skid plate, kingpin, and turntable jaws or Ringfeder assemblies).

NOTE – 14.1.3:For Fifth Wheel Coupling only

- Checks that the turntable jaws are open
- If the trailer has a block welded to the skid plate about 30mm behind the kingpin, ensures that the top of the turntable is the type that turns and is unlocked
- Ensures that the top of the turntable is well greased when used in the locked position
- Checks that the turntable and kingpin are aligned
- Checks the height of the trailer skid plate and makes any necessary adjustment, (the height of the skid plate should be slightly lower than the center of the turntable)
- Checks that all air hoses / cables do not obstruct prime mover while reversing.

Note – 14.1.3: For Ringfeder Connection Device

- Ensures coupling bolt is in the released position.

14.2 Satisfactorily completes procedure

- 14.2.1 appropriately maneuvers prime mover / truck during coupling procedure
- 14.2.2 correctly performs the “Tug Test”
- 14.2.3 correctly prepares vehicles for use

NOTE - 14.2.1: for Fifth Wheel Coupling only

- Confirms that no person or obstructions that would interfere with coupling are present
- Releases the park brake and slowly reverses the prime mover under the trailer until turntable jaws lock around the trailer kingpin (avoid jarring the semi trailer by moving slowly).

NOTE - 14.2.1:for Ringfeder Connection Device

- Confirms that no person or obstructions that would interfere with coupling are present
- Releases the park brake and slowly reverses the truck until the draw bar eye is engaged in the coupling head (avoid jarring the trailer by moving slowly).

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NOTE - 14.2.2:

- Checks that the trailer is locked on by attempting to move off in first gear with the trailer brakes on.

NOTE- 14.2.3: for Fifth Wheel Coupling only

- Ensures that electrical cables are connected and supported to avoid damage
- Ensures that cables and hoses cannot become caught in the tail shaft
- Applies and releases trailer brakes to check their operation
- Raises landing gear if appropriate
- Uses low gear until the supports are away from the ground, then changes to high gear
- Checks that there is sufficient space between the vehicle (frame and wheels) and the trailer frame
- Checks that there is sufficient space between the landing gear and the rear of the truck frame to allow for turning
- Checks all lights and other electrical equipment on the trailer are operating correctly.

NOTE- 14.2.3: for Ringfeder Connection Device

- Ensures that electrical cables are connected and supported to avoid damage
- Applies and releases trailer brakes to check their operation
- Raises landing gear if appropriate

Checks all lights and other electrical equipment on the trailer are operating correctly.

GENERAL NOTE:

"Fifth Wheel Coupling" means a device, except the upper rotating element and the kingpin (which are parts of the semi trailer), used with a prime mover, semi trailer or converter dolly, to allow quick coupling and uncoupling and to provide for articulation. (Vehicle and Traffic (Driver Licence and Vehicle Registration) Regulations 2000. 3 (1).

"Ringfeder Connection Device" means a device, which incorporates a latching mechanism to prevent unwanted disconnection of the trailer. The coupling head part of the system is attached to the towing vehicle and the trailer tongue is fitted with a ring, sometimes called a draw bar eye.

Applicants will be required to undergo an oral test in relation to the type of connection device that is not used during the test.

For Example -

1. If an applicant attends the test in a vehicle that is fitted with a "fifth wheel coupling" they will be required to answer questions relating to the coupling procedure used for the Ringfeder connection device.
2. If an applicant attends the test in a vehicle fitted with a Ringfeder connection device they will be required to answer questions relating to the coupling procedure used for the fifth wheel coupling.

HEAVY VEHICLE TESTING COMPETENCY STANDARDS

COMPONENT

TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

Fifth Wheel Coupling: test questions:

Applicants are to be asked the following questions when they present for a Heavy Vehicle Driver Licence Test under circumstances that prevent the practical demonstration of the Coupling – Uncoupling procedures.

Question 1:

What is the purpose of the trailer “block”?

Answer:

To prevent the turntable rotating on the trailer skid plate.

Question2:

List two major factors relating to the trailer need to be considered before coupling?

Answer:

Condition of the kingpin and skid plate and height of the trailer.

Question 3:

Describe the tug test procedure for ensuring that a trailer is securely coupled to a prime mover (Tug Test).

Answer:

When the vehicles are re-coupled, physically inspect the coupling, raise the trailer landing legs slightly, apply the trailer brake, release the primer mover park brake and attempt to drive the prime mover forward.

Question 4:

What action is required when coupling a fifth wheel coupling to a trailer without a block and why?

Answer:

The fifth wheel coupling (turntable) must be locked to prevent rotation of the ball race. Otherwise the turntable is able to rotate on the ball race as well as the skid plate, making it unsafe and creating a vehicle roll over situation in extreme cases.

Question 5:

What factors should be considered when selecting a site for uncoupling a loaded trailer?

Answer:

The area should be level and the ground firm enough to support the weight of the trailer and its load.

Question 6:

What precautions should be taken when uncoupling a loaded trailer on ground that is soft, or may become soft if rain develops?

Answer:

Support the trailer by placing long lengths of timber under the landing legs in order to spread the load.

Question 7:

What should the driver do prior to starting the trailer coupling process?

Answer:

Carry out a visual inspection of the turntable, trailer skid plate and pin assembly for cracks, warping/wear marks etc.

HEAVY VEHICLE TESTING COMPETENCY STANDARDS

COMPONENT

TESTING COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

Ringfeder Connection: test questions:

Question 1:

List two major factors relating to the trailer that need to be considered before coupling

Answer:

Condition of the coupling head (pin) and draw bar eye.

Question 2

Describe the tug test procedure for ensuring that a trailer is securely coupled to the towing vehicle (tug test).

Answer:

When the vehicles are re-coupled, physically inspect the coupling, raise the trailer landing legs slightly, apply the trailer brake, release the towing vehicle park brake and attempt to drive the towing vehicle forward.

Question 3:

What factors should be considered when selecting a site for uncoupling a loaded trailer?

Answer:

The area should be level and the ground firm enough to support the weight of the trailer and its load.

Question 4:

What should the driver do prior to starting the trailer coupling process?

Answer:

Carry out a visual inspection of the draw bar eye, coupling head and pin assembly for cracks, warping/wear marks etc.

Question 5:

What must be done after each coupling process?

Answer:

Check that the safety device is fully engaged.

HEAVY VEHICLE TESTING COMPETENCY STANDARDS

Complaints Process

External Service Providers have specific procedures for complaints to ensure that these are dealt with in a constructive and timely manner.

An applicant must lodge a formal complaint with the External Service Provider in writing, within 7 days of the issue complained of.

The External Service Provider must provide a written response to the complaint within 7 days of its lodgement.