



Being part of the NZ Transport Agency team

Improving safety on New Zealand roads is a priority for the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) and we consider our CoF certifiers as a vital part of our team. You play an important role in the community by helping keep vehicles safe on our roads.

This newsletter allows us to provide you with information outside inspection requirements but we also want to hear from you too. We encourage you to feedback about any issues you have so we can work together better to improve safety further.

Due to a shift in the way we work at the NZTA our frontline staff now come under a Regional Operations structure.

Contact details for our NZTA Regional Managers are listed in the box to the right.

For pure vehicle technical enquiries you should continue to follow the standard process which is usually to talk to your head office Technical Manager in the first instance. They will then coordinate a response or contact the NZTA Vehicles Unit if needed.

Andrew Thackwray, Manager Access & Use Auckland, 09 969 9800

Pat Aldridge, Manager Access & Use Wellington, 04 894 5200

David Pearks, Manager Access & Use Hamilton, 07 958 7220

Greg Allnutt, Manager Access & Use Christchurch, 03 964 2866

Why is data entry so important for CoF?

CoF results are the one thing that all operators have in common in the operator rating system (ORS).

ORS, which some operators will start to see information from in 2010, uses transport service licence (TSL) numbers, the only unique identifier for companies, to attribute safety events such as a CoF to the responsible operator.

This is now a legislated system so the data entered into LANDATA will come under closer scrutiny through ORS. So data integrity becomes even more important.

A common mistake is entering an incorrect TSL number against an inspection. This will affect the rating of the wrong operator and could cause huge issues for the operator, the inspector, the NZTA and means a lot of work to put right.

NZTA group manager Access & Use Ian Gordon says vehicle inspectors need to continue to be aware that the pass or fail of a CoF will certainly affect an

operator's rating and hence can affect their business once operator safety ratings are made public in 2012.

Ian warns inspectors may come under pressure from operators. In the past it was easy to rectify faults and obtain a CoF. Now the fault will immediately become a record on the system and contribute negatively to an operator's rating.

'Operators will want to ensure their vehicles are being inspected correctly, and to the right standards.'

Ian Gordon says 'We need your help to ensure that all TSL numbers are recorded for CoF pass and fails and that no vehicle leaves a station without the correct TSL number recorded. This is particularly important for CoF fails so that ORS can see what operator has what fault.'

He says vehicle inspectors need to continue doing a good job, to be vigilant

and accurate in their inspections, always maintain the requirements of the VIRMS, and continue to raise uncertainties with their Technical Managers.

Some CoF results will undoubtedly be challenged. Vehicle inspectors need to continue to focus on getting it right.

'My advice is simple. Safety first. Heavy vehicles are disproportionately represented in fatal crash statistics. Such vehicles should be assessed against the standards and the result of the inspection based on fact.'

ORS will help vehicle inspectors influence operators about maintenance programmes.

'Continuing to inspect accurately and fairly will give operators advice on the standard of their fleet. This, in turn, will give relevant operators the necessary incentives to improve the quality of their fleet.'

Are groundspreader and dedicated groundsprayers 'specialist overdimension vehicles'?

The VIRM defines a 'specialist overdimension vehicle' as a vehicle where its primary purpose is to carry out a specialist function that requires overdimension equipment, and the dismantling of the equipment would make it unusable for its intended purpose, or it would take more than four hours to dismantle the equipment. Additional operational requirements may apply, for example, if operated at night.

The issue of whether groundspreader or dedicated groundsprayers can be regarded as specialist overdimension vehicles keeps coming up. The answer is that it depends on whether they meet the definition of a specialist overdimension vehicle and specifically whether the wheels can be regarded as equipment.

The wide/multi wheels used on groundspreader and dedicated groundsprayers can be considered overdimension equipment. So these vehicles would meet the requirements but they would be Category 1 and so don't need a permit.

Examples: chip spreaders, forklifts, mobile cranes, snow ploughs, groundspreader or dedicated groundsprayers, etc.

Correct use of fault codes

With the introduction of the Operator Rating System (ORS) you will have noticed a slight change to the list of CoF fault codes component.

The Technical Support team would also like to start using the vast reporting systems available to us to review trends in pass and fail rates for particular items of the CoF inspection.

There may be items that show very low fail rates and are such a low safety risk that we may be able to remove these items from the focus of the vehicle

inspection. We would like to ask vehicle inspectors to use the fault codes- components diligently to best describe the component and use the fault codes to accurately describe the action required to rectify the fault.

From time to time we will request detailed use of specific codes such as the requirement (from 1 April 2009) to use the code BS I to describe a fault with the service brake that fails due to low brake efficiency and use BS M to describe a service brake fault that failed due to excessive imbalance.

CoF fails within tolerances won't count

The VIRM states:

3.5.5. Where the vehicle inspector requires further information in order to determine compliance with the requirements, the inspector must reject the vehicle until the information has been obtained. (Introduction page 3-17)

Some operators have been requesting that faults be deleted from LANDATA where it is later found that the vehicle could have been passed.

Vehicle Inspectors are encouraged to raise the awareness of this situation with operators and ensure that the required information is presented to them prior to the inspection taking place or at least provide the information within the timeframe TSDA's are able to amend the CoF result without going through the NZTA.

VIRM news

- Amendment 5 to the *In-service VIRM (WoF and CoF)* came into effect on 1 June 2009.
- Amendment 5.1 to the *In-service VIRM (WoF and CoF)* came into effect on 1 September 2009.
- Amendment 6 to the *In-service VIRM (WoF and CoF)* comes into effect on 1 December 2009.

Please ensure you have updated your VIRM with these amendments. If there are any problems with the documents you have received, please contact Vehicle Certifiers Registers on e-mail dvcupn@nzta.govt.nz or phone toll-free on 0800 587 287 option 4.

- The new version of the *In-service VIRM* (version 4) will be delivered to you in March 2010, and will come into effect in April 2010.

The correct repair of outrigger locking devices

Outriggers fitted to a vehicle must have a locking device to prevent its inadvertent extension or separation (refer Heavy vehicle page 2-3-1 of the VIRM). This is a key safety feature and faulty locks have resulted in serious accidents when the outrigger has struck a stationary object, or worse still a cyclist, pedestrian or other motorist.

The outrigger is usually supplied with a manufacturer's designed OE locking device incorporated into the assembly. It is very common for these to be external and able to be seen in the locked position when the outrigger is retracted.

If an OE locking device failed due to being defective, eg it is bent, worn or otherwise damaged or deteriorated so that it is not effective, then it's recommended a request be made for it to be repaired back to within safe tolerance of its original design rather than using an alternative method such as a small chain.

The bottom right photo shows that even though a chain was fitted it was not secured (an operational issue) and the vehicle was found to have the stabiliser leg protruding outside the dimensions of the vehicle – a potentially dangerous situation.

In this case it would be expected that if the manufacturer's locking device was not functioning as intended it be reinstated

to provide the original locking capabilities which does not rely on the operator remembering to engage the chain.



The result of an outrigger striking a car.

Note: under the PECPR Regulations the OSH Code of Practice for Cranes requires a vehicle fitted with outriggers to have either a locking device that is able to be seen in a locked position when the outriggers are retracted, or a visual or audible alarm for the driver to be warned that the outriggers are not fully retracted.



Manufacturers provided outrigger retention locking device.

Locking is apparent. No problem.



Manufacturers provided locking device inoperative and chain used with a 'D' link to prevent accidental extension.

Not repaired to within safe tolerance of manufacturer's original.

Tow couplings

Tow couplings have caused problems when they are not serviced or maintained correctly and neglect in this area will eventually lead to failure because of the huge loads imposed upon them during normal service.

Generally, tow couplings are bolted on to a certified draw beam component through a mounting flange. The large securing nut is torqued to approximately 500Nm and then locked using a split pin.

The 'bolt in' drawbar tow eyes, while not overly common, have been the cause of many crashes in the past due to components not being installed and maintained correctly.

It cannot be stressed enough that the manufacturer's preparation and installation methods should be strictly followed.

Due to the large number of stress reversal cycles thread pitches can become worn, loosening the coupling shank or nut, which in turn allows the nut to be pulled over the thread on the shank resulting in the trailer becoming detached.

The NZ Police CVIU has advised of a recent crash that was caused by a trailer becoming detached from the towing vehicle. In this instance the large nut unwound, allowing the coupling to pull through the mounting block assembly. In this incident it is not confirmed if the locking split pin was re-fitted during recent maintenance.



Recommendation

When inspecting either the mounting nut on the tow coupling or the bolt in tow eye, ensure full and complete security of these items. Any looseness or witness marks (nut or washer) indicating that the coupling is loose should immediately be cause for rejection and replacement. Just tightening the assembly is not adequate to provide continued safety!

Drain valves

The Heavy Vehicle Brake Code and the New Zealand Heavy-vehicle Brake Specification (Schedule 5) contain similar requirements for the air brake system air reservoirs to have a drain valve fitted.

Heavy Vehicle Brake Code

Clause 4.2.9 Each air reservoir in an air brake system must be fitted with a condensate drain valve at the lowest point. Where an automatic condensate valve is fitted, it must have a provision for manual operation.

Schedule 5

Clause 3.5 A drain valve must be fitted to the lowest point of each brake reservoir, specifically, the reservoirs of the service brake and park brake, and including the so-called 'wet tank'.

Clause 3.6 An automatic drain valve must have a means of manual operation.

Vehicle inspectors must ensure that mandatory drain valves are fitted and operational when carrying out CoF inspections on vehicles certified to the Heavy Vehicle Brake Code and Schedule 5.



For more information

Visit the NZ Transport Agency website at www.nzta.govt.nz or call our contact centre on 0800 587 287 for technical assistance.

Road User Rule changes

Whether you drive, ride, cycle or walk in New Zealand, changes to the 'Road User Rule' will affect you from 1 November 2009.

The most high-profile change is the ban on the use of hand-held mobile phones while driving.

While driving, a driver may use a mobile phone to make, receive or end a phone call only if they do not have to hold or manipulate the phone in doing so (voice activated etc). Or –

provided the mobile phone is securely mounted to the vehicle – if the driver manipulates the phone infrequently and briefly.

However, drivers must not create, send or read a text message or use a mobile phone in any other way.

There are 23 other amendments to the Road User Rule which include:

- riders of mopeds and motorcycles must switch their headlamps

on during daylight hours, unless manufactured before 1 January 1980

- when a driver has to cross a special vehicle lane to turn left or get to a parking space, they must now do so in the minimum length of the lane necessary but no more than 50 metres.

Further information (and Q&As) about the amendments can be accessed via www.nzta.govt.nz or by calling the NZ Transport Agency on 0800 699 000.

Our contact details

For general enquiries, or contact information about the NZ Transport Agency please check our website www.nzta.govt.nz or email us at info@nzta.govt.nz

0800 587 287
(for technical assistance and reporting staff movements)

UNISYS 0800 243 687
(for problems with user access codes and passwords)

TRC 0800 108 809
(for phone inquiries from members of the public)

We welcome your feedback. Please send any comments to:

Vehicles Unit
NZ Transport Agency
PO Box 5084
Wellington 6145

Email: feedback@nzta.govt.nz