

Section Three - Vehicle Standards

3.1 Maintenance facilities and technical staff (in-house maintenance)

The operator must show that they have provision for:

- suitable facilities for all inspections of vehicles and trailers within the fleet
- trained and competent technical staff to carry out maintenance

In point 3.1 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Does the operator use maintenance providers or in-house maintenance
2. Does the operator hold an Institute of Road Transport Engineers (IRTE) or equivalent accreditation in relation to their maintenance facilities and the training of their technical staff
3. Operators who carry out their own safety inspections must ensure that the facilities and tools comply with the guide to maintaining roadworthiness <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-maintaining-roadworthiness>
4. Name the person who is in charge of the workshop & equipment
5. How are recalibration dates and servicing details monitored
6. Is there a process for reporting faulty or non-calibrated equipment and calibration date
7. Is there a policy in place to cover the competence of maintenance staff and CPD
8. How are refresher courses and specialist equipment training courses planned and undertaken
9. Is there a 5-year training matrix in place to show what courses have been taken and what courses are planned

3.2 Maintenance contracts

The operator must show they have an effective schedule of full and regular audits to establish and maintain quality standards and a robust administrative process if they use an independent maintenance provider.

Operators should adopt a risk-based approach for regularly monitoring the performance of their maintenance contractors, including an annual review with them and a quality assurance audit no more than 3 years from starting the contract or from the date of the last audit.

An independent audit supplied by the maintenance provider can be accepted as evidence of a quality assurance audit provided it was completed by an appropriate organisation.

The maintenance provider must be as specified on the licence.

In point 3.2 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Detail the processes in place to deal with audit and assessment outcomes
2. What date were the maintenance contracts last reviewed, give details of contracts, who they are with and stated inspection periods
3. Are audits carried out on external maintenance providers by the operators' own staff? If yes then detail who is responsible for ensuring that the quality standards are met. If no, then who carries out the audit of the maintenance provider
4. Evidence of the last quality assurance audit (this must be less than 3 years ago)

3.3 Forward planning

A robust and effective forward planning process must be in place, using either a manual or an electronic process defined by the operator.

The transport manager or responsible person must be able to demonstrate a full understanding of the need for forward planning and the administrative process of forward planning. Where this is administered by other staff, the transport manager or responsible person must be able to show full management and control of the responsibilities delegated to others.

The operator should have processes in place to ensure that vehicle, trailer or component recalls are actioned.

In point 3.3 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Who is responsible for forward planning and updating
2. How is it monitored for compliance
3. Is the planner electronically stored or a manual planner
4. Are the safety inspection dates set for at least 6 months in advance

3.4 Inspection frequency

The transport manager or responsible person must be able to clearly state the established frequency of periodic maintenance for the fleet and demonstrate a robust adherence to this.

Where a system or administrative process is delegated to others, the transport manager or responsible person must show full management and control

In point 3.4 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. What is the inspection frequency on the vehicles and trailers
2. Who is responsible for ensuring that this is adhered to
3. Check the operator licence for the specified frequency
4. Check maintenance contracts and confirm that they are in line with the conditions of the licence
5. Give evidence of a sample check of vehicles and trailers to confirm that compliance of timescale is being adhered to
6. If issues are found during sampling, Note the Details Here “. If NO issues are found write “refer to records sampled workbook”
7. What is the process to ensure the missed safety inspection is brought back in line
8. Give evidence supporting any justified reason where the inspection frequency has been extended on the operating licence

3.5 First use Inspections

The operator must demonstrate a robust process for dealing with vehicles or trailers in terms of first use including hire vehicles, third-party trailers and those being brought back into use.

In point 3.5 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Is there a Policy in place advising on first-use inspection procedures
2. Give policy name, number, and review date
3. Detail the processes for new vehicles being added to the fleet, and the process for hired, leased, or borrowed vehicles returning from “off-road” status
4. Give details of the person responsible for overseeing the above is complied with

3.6 Third-party trailers

The operator must demonstrate a robust process for dealing with the use of hired or third-party trailers in terms of first-use inspections, maintenance provisions, and making sure there is available space to add a vehicle to their operator licence.

In point 3.6 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Is there a policy in place for managing the use of third-party vehicles & trailers, give the policy name, number, and review date
2. Give the name of the person who is responsible for dealing with compliance of the policy
3. Give detail of what is covered in the policy
4. Does the operator use third-party trailers
5. How is the roadworthiness of third-party trailers established
6. Who is the person responsible for overseeing this is complied with?
7. How is the latest copy of the trailer’s inspection sheet obtained and stored? Give details of the latest copy

Is there a contract in place with third-party trailer owners to ensure maintenance standards are met

3.7 Vehicle off road (VOR)

When a vehicle is declared off the road (VOR) this must be recorded on the vehicle maintenance file, stating the date and reason.

A robust system must be in place to ensure vehicles with vehicle off-road status are not used. This is particularly important when the vehicle is unsafe.

The operator can suspend the safety inspection schedule if they declare a vehicle off the road and the period it is off the road extends over the next planned safety inspection. This is commonly used for seasonal-use vehicles or vehicles requiring extensive repairs.

A vehicle that has been logged as off the road and has missed a scheduled safety inspection should only be brought back into service after a safety inspection confirms that it is roadworthy. The date of this inspection can be used to reschedule regular inspections.

In point 3.7 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Give evidence of a robust vehicle off-road policy
2. Give detail of what is covered in the policy and the process
3. Name the person responsible for ensuring compliance with the policy
4. What actions are taken to ensure the vehicle is not used
5. Detail how this is done, i.e., keys in a locked cabinet, sign in the window
6. Detail how the scheduling department is made aware of the vehicle being out of service and returning to service

3.8 Safety Inspection documentation

A robust system of planned maintenance must be proven by full and effective documentation.

The transport manager or responsible person must demonstrate the ability to access any documentation, and, in each case, all forms should meet or exceed the standards in the [guide to maintaining roadworthiness](#).

In point 3.8 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Are vehicle files complete, including safety inspections, vehicles off the road, calibration certificates, invoices for repair work rectification and driver defect reports
2. If records are not complete, discuss why. For example, was it a new vehicle or hire vehicle
3. Detail any issues found during record sampling. If no issues are found, please write “refer to records sampled workbook”
4. Confirm that the inspection sheets are fully complete and comply with the guide to maintaining roadworthiness
5. Evidence of a Process in place for the use of the VTG10 form for any notifiable alterations.
6. Who is responsible for the completion and submission of the VTG10

3.9 Braking performance assessment

A robust system must be in place to plan and monitor braking system performance in line with the [guide to maintaining roadworthiness](#).

In point 3.9 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Confirm that there is a policy in place for braking performance assessments
2. Give details of the policy process used to monitor braking performance tests, give name, review date, frequency type, laden or unladen
3. Who is the person responsible to check both inspection sheets and brake test results?
4. How often are internal audit checks carried out on the assessment and the frequency

Evidence that after a failed brake assessment, or work carried out on the braking system that a satisfactory brake assessment is achieved.

3.10 Annual test inspections

The operator must show a process of monitoring annual test results to identify trends and take appropriate action where necessary. An initial pass rate of 95% should be demonstrated over the previous 2 years. The operator must also provide all test history for all vehicles and trailers operated by them over the same period. Mobile cranes are not exempt from plating and testing regulations.

In point 3.10 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Confirm that there is a documented process in place to monitor annual test performance for all vehicles and trailers operated.
2. Name the person responsible for documenting the test performance
3. Detail the processes in place to monitor trends and issues on vehicles and trailers maintained both internal and external
4. How frequently are checks carried out
5. What action is taken when issues arise
6. Name the person responsible for monitoring MOT test history and initial pass rates
7. Detail how is this done - do they have access to OCRS and the vehicle operator licence service

Please note A pass after rectification at the test station (PRS) counts as a test failure

3.11 Tachograph and speed limiter equipment

Where vehicles are used in scope, the operator must demonstrate a clear and robust system for dealing with all repairs and calibration to tachograph equipment, including a comprehensive forward planning process for calibration.

Where appropriate, the operator must be able to demonstrate a process to monitor speed limiter effectiveness and identification of faults and appropriate action taken.

In point 3.11 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Name the person responsible for maintenance or other contracts with calibration centres
2. What action is taken if calibrations are late
3. Is there a contract in place with the calibration and maintenance centres
4. What is the process of ensuring calibration and maintenance is carried out correctly
5. Detail evidence of any speed limiter checks carried out - what are speed limiters set at

3.12 Sustainability and environmental management

Check vehicle telematics reports to ensure systems are working.

Check the understanding of low emission zones and how they affect the operation.

Check periodic safety inspections are checking emissions control systems are present and that they are correctly operating.

In point 3.12 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Give details of the environmental and sustainability policy, policy name, number and review date
2. Name the person responsible for compliance with the sustainability policy
3. What is the content of the policy? Such as low emission, clean air zones, noise pollution, carbon footprint, suitable types of vehicles, anti-idling, alternative fuels, minimising the impact on the environment and future sustainability
4. Who is responsible for ensuring compliance with clean air policies and ensuring only appropriate spec of vehicles enter clean air zones
5. What procedures are in place relating to emissions such as clean air, sustainable operations, and anti-idling policy
6. Evidence that maintenance is being carried out on things such as filters, smoke analysis checks
7. How is the usage of AdBlue monitored? Give details of how this is done and check AdBlue invoices.

3.13 Wheel and tyre management

The operator must have arrangements in place to ensure the vehicle tyres are legal, safe and effectively managed and ensure wheel security is maintained.

The system needs to include effective daily monitoring of wheel security and ensure correct wheel fitment maintenance and torquing procedures are followed.

In point 3.13 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Give details of the wheel and tyre management policy, name, policy number and review date
2. Who is responsible for compliance with the policy
3. Does the policy cover tread depth, tyre age, pressure, re-torquing, fitting of tyres, storage and disposal of tyres and training of staff
4. What is the process used for the repair and replacement of worn or damaged tyres?
5. How is the condition of tyres monitored?
6. Check training records for evidence of toolbox talks related to wheel and tyre management. Is training given at induction?
7. Are audits and spot checks carried out on driver defect reports and inspection sheets to ensure tyre defects are being recognised?
8. Detail who is carrying out spot checks and audits, how this is done and by who
9. How and where are new or part-used tyres stored, and how are old tyres disposed of
10. What is the procedure for the fitting of a new tyre and at what intervals are re-torquing carried out

3.14 Driver Walkaround Checks

There must be a process in place to demonstrate that walkaround checks are carried out effectively, together with a documented audit process that checks compliance with the requirements.

This must include hired or loaned vehicles and third-party trailers.

Instructions and training in writing to support this process should also exist

In point 3.14 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Is there a policy in place for walkaround checks and defect reporting, give the policy name number and renew date
2. Who is responsible for compliance with the policy
3. What training is given regarding walkaround checks
4. Give details of relevant toolbox talks, CPC courses, memos, or policies
5. Are walk-around checks covered in the driver's induction/handbook
6. Detail how is compliance with and effectiveness of walkaround checks monitored
7. Evidence and note details of the last audit, gate check or spot check carried out on walk-around checks

3.15 Driver defect reporting

A robust and effective defect reporting process must be in place which includes a nil defect process.

The transport manager or responsible person must be able to show effective and corrective procedures in place to administer the required standard

In point 3.15 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Give details of the driver defect reporting policy, policy name, number, and review date
2. Who is the person responsible for ensuring compliance with the policy
3. Detail the process for reporting and recording a defect
4. How long are NIL defect reports kept
5. What is the timescale for reporting defects, who are they reported to and what action is taken?
6. Give details of a reported defect, including the process, timescale and action taken to rectify the issue.

3.16 Vehicle recalls

On receiving notification of a safety recall for vehicles from a manufacturer, it is important that operators act promptly to ensure the rectification work is undertaken. This will remove the risk that the vehicle may become unroadworthy due to the potential defect identified by the manufacturer.

In point 3.16 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Detail How are notifications of Safety-Related Recalls (SRR) received
2. Name the person responsible for checking, dealing with and ensuring the recall is actioned
3. What system is in place regarding timescales, action taken and what evidence of rectification is to be kept on file
4. Give evidence of documentation relating to an SRR is in a vehicle file from notification to rectification.

3.17 Prohibitions and safety-critical defects

The operator must demonstrate processes to identify in a timely manner and effectively deal with prohibitions encountered or safety-critical defects.

The investigation must establish causes or trends and provide documented evidence to substantiate their actions.

In point 3.17 section you need to enter the following details in your audit template

1. Give the name of the policy, number and review date of the Prohibitions and safety-critical defects policy
2. Who is responsible for compliance of the policy
3. Detail the content and process involved, how they are monitored and investigated
4. Give details of any prohibitions received or safety-critical defects (SCD) found
5. Give details of investigation carried out, outcome and lessons learnt
6. Evidence of reporting correspondence forwarded to the Traffic Commissioners