

Daily walkaround checks

A driver or responsible person must undertake a daily walkaround check before a vehicle is used. As a driver, DVSA recommend this check is carried out before you first drive the vehicle on the road each day.

Where more than one driver will use the vehicle during the day's running, the driver taking charge of a vehicle should make sure it is roadworthy and safe to drive by carrying out their own walkaround check; however, due to health and safety implications this may not be practical on all occasions.

An example of a system for managing in-service driver changes is where a walkaround check is carried out by a responsible person, and the drivers monitor the vehicle during the day's running. When there is a change in driver during the day, it is sometimes unsafe to carry out a walkaround check, for example at a bus stop. This will be considered acceptable where there is a robust driver defect reporting system in place, which details the initial walkaround check and any defects or 'nil' defects reported during the day for the various drivers of that particular vehicle.

The driver is always legally responsible for the condition of the vehicle while in use. Therefore, conducting a daily walkaround check is a vital part of a driver's core role. Operators can delegate the walkaround check to a responsible person, who must carry out a minimum of one check in 24 hours.

The check should cover the whole vehicle or combination. The check should cover interior and exterior items that can be safely assessed without necessarily the use of a workshop.

Assistance may be required at some time during the check, for example, to see that lights are working. Alternatively, a brake pedal application tool may be used as an effective way of making sure stop lamps are working, and that the braking system is free of leaks. In addition, a torch, panel lock key or other equipment may be needed.

It could be beneficial to incorporate a post use check, to save downtime.

It is important that drivers are aware of the overall vehicle dimensions high vehicles should display an in-cab overall height indicator. It is also important to consider route planning before starting your journey if low bridges need to be avoided.

A system of reporting and recording defects

There must be a system of reporting and recording defects that may affect the roadworthiness of the vehicle. This must include how they were rectified before the vehicle is used. Daily defect checks are vital, and the results of such checks must be recorded as part of the maintenance system. It is important that enough time is allowed for the completion of walkaround checks and that staff are trained to carry them out thoroughly. Drivers should be made aware that daily defect reporting is one of the critical elements of any effective vehicle roadworthiness system.

Examples of how to perform a walkaround check can be found on YouTube under DVSA HGV or PSV driver's daily walkaround checks. (Link Attached)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQ367EkH_2c&list=PLAc7vo2yoTuhcdJtiiUgEp5MMnfC-hGx

Drivers' defect reports

As the driver, you are legally responsible for the condition of your vehicle when in use on the road.

Drivers must report any defects, or symptoms of defects, that could prevent the safe operation of the vehicles. In addition to daily walkaround checks, you must monitor the roadworthiness of your vehicle when being driven, and be alert to any indication that the vehicle is developing a fault eg warning lights, vibrations or other symptoms. When a vehicle is on site work, you should walk around the vehicle before leaving the site to identify any faults. If any safety defects are found, you must not use the vehicle on the road until it is repaired.

A responsible person must undertake a daily walkaround check (first use inspection) before a vehicle is used. All drivers, must carry out the check before they first drive the vehicle on the road each day. Assistance may be required at some time during the inspection, for example to see that all lights (especially brake lights) are working. Alternatively, a brake pedal application tool may be used as an effective way of making sure stop lamps are working and that the braking system is free of leaks. In addition, a torch, panel lock key or other equipment may be needed.

Upon a driver completing a daily walk round check, if any defects are found, they should (where possible) be rectified before the vehicle is used on a public road. In instances where repairs can be made on the spot, these usually include such items as a bulb not working, broken rear lamp lens, a tyre requiring replacement or where a technician can attend and effect a repair, these should be undertaken promptly.

In circumstances where a repair cannot be carried out at the vehicles location (be it on the road or at a depot), the vehicle should be recovered to a repair centre to be repaired if the defect would constitute a serious safety issue if it were to be used. In cases such as this, under no circumstances should a vehicle be moved where a defect is found that renders the vehicle to be in an unroadworthy condition and unfit to be driven on a public highway. Where a defect is found, and is such that the vehicle can be driven safely to a repairing centre, then this is acceptable, as long as the vehicle is not used to carry out it's normal function by deviating to a customers premises to load/unload whilst on route.

Upon completion of a defect report, the report sheet should be taken with the driver. In the event of that driver being stopped at a VOSA road-side check, he/she will likely be asked for the same. Upon completion of the drivers daily duties, the defect report sheet should be finalised, noting any defect(s) that may have been found, or if none, then 'Nil' should be noted in the section where a defect(s) would normally be entered. Regardless of either, the report sheet should be signed off by the driver.

If a driver has only completed a days journey where the start and finish points are at the drivers home base, the defect report sheet should be handed in to a responsible person in the traffic office. Where any minor defect(s) found during the course of that days work have been recorded by the driver, these should then be brought to the attention of a responsible person in the traffic office and the defect(s) must be rectified before the vehicle is used again. In the case of a driver finding a serious defect during the working day, the driver must find a safe place to stop and contact his/her home base immediately.



The logo for NPC (National Police Coaches) features a stylized globe in the background. A large, grey speech bubble is superimposed over the globe, containing the letters 'NPC' in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font.

NPC

Providing a written report

Any defects found during the daily walkaround check, while the vehicle is in use or on its return to base, must be the subject of a written report by the driver or some other person responsible for recording defects.

The details recorded should include:

- vehicle registration or identification mark
- date
- details of the defects or symptoms
- the reporter's name
- who the defect was reported to
- assessment of the defect
- rectification work
- date rectification work was completed.

It is also common practice to use a composite form that includes a list of the items checked each day. Where practicable the system should incorporate 'nil' reporting when each driver makes out a report sheet - or confirms by another means that a daily check has been carried out and no defects found.

Appropriate action

All drivers' defect reports must be given to a responsible person with sufficient authority to ensure that any appropriate action is taken. This might include taking the vehicle out of service. Any report listing defects is part of the vehicle's maintenance record and must be kept for at least 15 months, together with details of the rectification work and repairer.

It is good practice to have 'nil' defect reports as they are a useful means of checking that drivers are carrying out their duties and these forms can be used for audit purposes.

A 'nil' defect reporting system demonstrates a check has been conducted and is a positive report that the vehicle is free from defects.

Drivers' responsibilities

Drivers must be made aware of their legal responsibilities regarding vehicle condition and the procedures for reporting defects. Operators must ensure that all drivers are adequately trained to perform this function, and this may be part of their driver's certificate of professional competence training. Driver's responsibilities should be detailed in writing, describing defect reporting systems as well as any other duties they are expected to perform. The driver should sign to confirm they have received their responsibilities in writing and understand what is required. A copy of the document should be kept on file. Drivers share the responsibility for the vehicle's roadworthiness with the operator. They may be fined or prosecuted for roadworthiness offences found on vehicles if they are considered partly or wholly responsible.

Minor repairs by drivers

If you are an operator, you should bear in mind that drivers who are expected to repair minor defects in service would need appropriate training.

Traffic commissioners can take action against a driver who fails to complete an adequate walkaround check. This could lead to a driver conduct hearing, which may result in the loss of the vocational driving licence.

To comply with UK/EU regulations and legislation, NPCoaches must be seen to be taking steps to ensure all drivers are aware of the law, its interpretations, and consequences. This is why we ask all drivers to read this policy and declaration, and sign below to demonstrate understanding and acceptance of responsibilities, both legally and contractually.

By signing this document you are stating you have read and understood the company's policy with regard to the responsibilities involved in driving passenger vehicles, and are aware of and understand your legal responsibilities toward your physical condition whilst driving and working.

I have read this document, understand why I am being asked to sign, and agree to do so freely

Signed Print Name

Dated
Driver

Signed Print Name

Dated
NPCoaches