



FISA Safety Guide 706 Timber Haulage

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Volvo Trucks. Driving Progress

INTRODUCTION

This leaflet covers the safe practices to be followed when operating large goods vehicles (LGVs) in the forest. Whilst the main thrust of this guide relates to timber haulage operations in the forest, sections are also appropriate to access by other heavy goods vehicles, such as low loaders and vehicles delivering fuel or material for use in the construction and maintenance of forest roads.

You can use this leaflet, along with the manufacturer's handbook for your vehicle, as part of the risk assessment process to help identify the controls to put in place when carrying out haulage operations in the forest.

You must assess the effects that other forest operations and weather conditions will have on the haulage activity as well as following this guidance.

Operators must have had appropriate training in the operation of their equipment and understand the increased risks of operating in a remote forest environment.¹

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

1. Use the following PPE:
 - Safety Helmet (complying with EN 397) when the risk assessment identifies that it is required.
 - Suitable hearing protection (complying with EN 352) where the noise level exceeds 80dB (A) (see INDG363: *Don't lose your hearing*).
 - Suitable protective gloves when inspecting or carrying out any maintenance or when handling fuels, oils or lubricants and hydraulic components.
 - Protective boots with good grip and ankle support (complying with ISO 20345).
 - Suitable eye protection during some maintenance tasks and when the risk assessment identifies that it is required.
 - Non-sag outer clothing appropriate to the weather conditions. High visibility clothing (compliant with EN 471) should be worn when the risk assessment identifies that it is needed.
2. A suitable first-aid kit, including a large wound dressing, should be available in the vehicle (see HSE Leaflet INDG214: *First Aid at Work. Your questions answered*).
3. Hand cleaning materials such as waterless skin cleanser or soap and paper towels should be available.
4. You should have available and know how to use an emergency kit for spills of fuel, oil or chemicals as appropriate.

GENERAL ADVICE

5. Directional signage in the forest environment is very limited and so it is important that drivers know how to get to the particular worksite and are aware of any hazards

and constraints on the route. Forest roads are unsurfaced single-track roads with few passing places and turning points and it is important that agreed methods of work and communication are in place to minimise risks. Keep speed down and report road defects.

6. The public are invited into many forest areas where they undertake a range of recreational activities. Drivers should be aware of their presence whilst operating in the forest environment. Consider using flashing beacons in some circumstances.

THE LORRY

7. Any risk zone specified by the manufacturer should be clearly and prominently marked.
8. Adequate lighting should be fitted if you are working in poor visibility.
9. Where the vehicle is transporting dangerous goods such as fuel or explosives, appropriate warning notices should be displayed in accordance with ADR regulations.

DRIVING

10. Access to and egress from the worksite should only be via the routes identified in the site plan and risk assessment, and the driver should be aware of all of the hazards he will encounter on the route. This extends to the agreed routes on public roads.
11. Forest roads are designed and built to accommodate HGVs travelling at 15mph. Speeds in excess of this increase the risks and cause more damage. Keep to the agreed speed limits set in the risk assessment.
12. Be aware of other road users and show courtesy when driving in the forest.
13. Visibility is generally poor in the forest environment. Drivers should drive with dipped headlights in the forest or with daytime running lights.
14. Avoid travelling in convoys in the forest as this can cause significant damage to the road network.
15. Be aware of weather conditions and avoid driving on roads following a freeze/thaw or when roads are very wet. Report road defects promptly to the Forest Works Manager.
16. Ensure the vehicle has turned and is facing towards the exit before loading.

LOADER

17. Where the vehicle is fitted with a loader, the loader must be regularly inspected to detect wear and tear that could make the equipment unsafe to use. Loader inspections must also comply with the annual inspections required under the Lifting Operations Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER). (See HSE leaflet INDG290: *Lifting Equipment at Work: A brief guide to the law*).

¹ Suitable FMOCS or CPCS certificate for the crane, valid CPC, first aid training and ADR certification where this is appropriate.

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18. Maintenance must be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's handbook which should be available. Maintenance records must be recorded and retained.
19. Suitable markings should be in place and visible.
 - Load plate.
 - Operation of loading controls.
 - Risk zone.

LOADING AND UNLOADING

20. Ensure that the lorry is parked as level as possible and always apply the vehicle handbrake and trailer brake as appropriate.
21. Take special care in areas frequented by the public, where appropriate additional signage should be displayed (e.g., Keep Off Stacked Timber) and use of flashing beacons on the vehicle should be considered.
22. Ensure that the vehicle is in a safe area and consider:-
 - The location of powerlines.
 - That there are no overhead telephone lines.
 - Stabiliser legs are not on top of a culvert.
 - That there are no underground services adjacent to the stack or where stabiliser legs are deployed.
 - You are clear of any other structures or obstacles, including isolated trees in windy conditions.
23. Deploy stabiliser legs to adequately allow for safe operation of the loader and where necessary reduce the load moved in each lift. Consider the use of bearers under the stabiliser legs to aid support when necessary.
24. Keep loads being lifted as close to the ground as possible.
25. Under normal operating conditions, stop work immediately if any person or machine enters the risk zone identified for your vehicle.
26. If you are loading another lorry, the driver of that vehicle must be outwith the risk zone or in the lorry cab but only when this offers adequate FOPS protection.
27. The jaws of the timber grapple should meet or overlap during the loading process except when a single piece is being lifted. Do not overload the grapple or the loader.
28. Do not exceed the maximum legal gross vehicle weight for the public road.
29. Do not reposition the vehicle unless the loader is lowered flat on the timber or is in the normal parked position.
30. Where the operation involves slinging loads, use only tested equipment that is subject to a periodic inspection and is free from damage, in compliance with LOLER.
31. Leave the stack in a stable condition when loading is complete.
32. Always ensure that the stabiliser legs are in the stowed position before setting off.
33. When unloading in the mill, adhere to the site rules for that facility and ensure that timber stacks are constructed and maintained in a stable condition.
34. Sweep down at the designated place in the timber yard before leaving the site.

LOAD SECURITY

35. Where a headboard is fitted as part of load restraint, it must be properly maintained.
36. For vehicles fitted with cab-height headboards, secure each bunk of timber by 1 suitably rated strap. Where a headboard is absent or only at partial height, secure the bunk closest to the cab with at least 2 suitably rated straps.
37. The load restraint system must be sufficient for the material onboard, taking into account product length, weather conditions, time of year and bolster pin configuration.
38. Where the logs are supported by only 2 uprights or bolster pins, the ends of the outer logs should extend at least 300mm (12 inches) beyond the uprights.
39. Calculate the number of straps required to secure the load based on their lashing capacity (LC). NB: this is half the breaking force (BF Min). These ratings are displayed on the straps.
40. At certain times of the year bark can be removed during the harvesting process. Where bark is absent, in all cases each bunk should be suitably secured with a minimum of 2 suitably rated straps.
41. Check straps and re-tension prior to leaving the forest and moving onto the public road. Replace defective straps immediately.

FURTHER READING

Emergency Planning	FISA 802
Electricity in the Forest	FISA 804
Training and Certification	FISA 805
First Aid at Work	INDG 214
Managing Health and Safety in Forestry	INDG 294
Don't Lose Your Hearing	INDG 363
Providing and Using Work Equipment Safely: A brief guide	INDG 291
Lifting Equipment at Work: A brief guide to the law	INDG 290
Roundwood Code of Practice.	
FISA Drivers Handbook.	

Name:

Checklist verified by:.....

Date:

Further information

This guide is produced by the Forest Industry Safety Accord (FISA) 59 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2JG Tel: 0131 220 0855 Email: info@ukfisa.com

Copies of this guide and all other FISA priced and free publications are available by mail order from the FISA office or through the FISA website www.ukfisa.com. From here you will also be able to access a wide range of additional forestry safety information including frequently updated safety alerts.

This guide sets out evidence of good practice for a specific forestry task. Deviation from the guide should only be considered after a full risk assessment has been undertaken by competent persons. Health and safety obligations MUST be met at all times.

THINK SAFE / STAY SAFE

For more general information about health and safety, please visit the Health and Safety Executive website www.hse.gov.uk