

# **TAIL LIFT AND PALLET TRUCK GUIDANCE Q&A**

## **IS THIS GUIDANCE LEGALLY BINDING?**

This is a best practice guide for the safe delivery of pallets from a tail lift. Although not legally binding an employer has a legal obligation to ensure the safety of their employees and others who may be affected by their work activities. Furthermore, it could be used as evidence of guidance available to a business being prosecuted which could assist a conviction or be an aggravating feature when looking at penalty.

## **WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DON'T FOLLOW ITS ADVICE?**

As an employer you should be adhering to all Health & Safety regulations. The guidance goes hand in hand with other legal provisions as detailed under “The Law” in the guidance document, and as with other best practice guidance it may go further than what is legally required. But it will assist in helping to identify the risks and implement safe systems of work for the protection of all concerned in the movement of palletised goods.

## **WHY HASN'T HSE GIVEN A SAFE MAXIMUM WEIGHT FOR A TAIL LIFT/PUMP TRUCK DELIVERY?**

Following HSE pallet weight testing in 2017 it was determined that there was a number of factors which can significantly increase the force required to move a loaded pallet with weight being just one. Other factors included: site and weather conditions, access to premises, ground conditions, incline/decline, distance of travel and physical ability of operative. This last factor is so variable that there is no realistic safe weight that is suitable for everyone; it is for the organisation using this delivery system to risk assess what they consider to be safe with their team, equipment and customer/delivery points.

## **CAN WE APPLY OUR OWN WEIGHT LIMITS IF WE WISH TO?**

You can apply your own weight. As explained above it is for the operator to carry out the risk assessment and conclude what can be done safely and what requires a different system.

## **WHERE CAN I FIND AN EXAMPLE OF AN OPERATORS' RISK ASSESSMENT?**

A risk assessment is the responsibility of an employer and there is a link in the document to the HSE website where a sample risk assessment can be found. A sample driver delivery check list is provided in the guidance document – this is in effect a dynamic risk assessment.

## **DO MY DRIVERS HAVE TO COMPLETE A 'QUESTIONNAIRE/ASSESSMENT' FOR EVERY TAIL LIFT DELIVERY?**

Completion of the questionnaire is a business decision you will have to make; ideally yes, as this will provide evidence of site conditions at the delivery point and will encourage drivers to conduct a dynamic risk assessment before attempting delivery. Completing a written assessment will help protect your driver's wellbeing and hopefully avoid the risk of injury.

### **DO WE HAVE TO SUPPLY ELECTRIC PUMP TRUCKS TO ALL OUR DRIVERS WITH A TAIL LIFT FITTED?**

There is no legal requirement to supply electric pump trucks, however it is essential that the type of pallet truck used is suitable for the task.

### **WILL THIS ONLY APPLY TO HAULAGE/TRANSPORT INDUSTRY OR EVERYONE WHO OPERATES VEHICLES WITH A TAIL LIFT?**

The guidance is aimed at all employers that require their employees who handle pallet movements on and of a tail lift regardless of class of vehicle.

### **HOW IS THE RHA PUBLICISING THE GUIDANCE?**

We're launching a social media and member communications campaign to roll it out across the industry. We're also featuring it in the trade press. Keep an eye out for more communications over the coming weeks and months.

### **WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP PROMOTE THE GUIDANCE?**

Please ensure your staff are familiar with it, and share it with other logistics operators.