

Western Route Safety Hour Topic

Overloading vehicles

2015



Welcome to your safety hour - This edition focusses on road vehicle overloading

It is easy to accidentally over-load a vehicle, especially smaller vans & pick-ups up to 3.5 tonnes such as Ford Transits. However strict weight limits are in place for many legal & operational reasons

The driver is held responsible for the vehicle being legal, including the GVW and axle weight.

Did you know?

The DVSA (previously known as the DVLA and VOSA) have installed 16 (so far) in-tarmac weighbridges on motorways / dual carriageways across the UK. This equipment weighs every single vehicle by axle and has a photo taken with ANPRS.

Weight limits

Every vehicle has a manufacturer plate showing the maximum design weights – do you know where it is on your vehicle?

BL CARS LTD.	
2710 kg	
6710 kg	
1- 1000 kg	
2- 1710 kg	
PAINT	TRIM

What it means:-

1st line – 2710kg GVW Gross Vehicle Weight (or Max Authorised Mass) is the total of the vehicle

and its load/personnel/fuel.

2nd line – 6710kg GTW Gross Train Weight is the maximum of the vehicle AND ITS TRAILER in total.

3rd line - 1000kg Max weight over the front axle

4th line - 1710kg Max weight over the rear axle.

What are the consequences?

There is a maximum fine of up to £5000 per offence for the driver **and** the operator. The vehicle could be parked up until the load was rectified. The company Operators license could be restricted or suspended.

There is no defense other than the vehicle being on its way to a weigh-bridge OR up to 5% has been added due to weather conditions (rain-water / snow).

Discussion points

Please discuss the following questions in your safety hour group:

- How do you know when a vehicle is over-weight?
- What would be affected by an over-weight vehicle?
- How / when do you check-weigh your vehicle?

We can all make a difference

- Please agree in your group what you will do differently as a result of your safety hour discussion today...
 - ...As an individual employee?
 - ...As a team member?
 - ...As a team leader, supervisor or manager?
- How will you hold each other to account for what you have agreed to do?

Western Route is committed to ensuring every one of us goes home safely at the end of every day

For further information regarding Western Safety Hour including topics and a calendar of scheduled safety hours see our Share Point Site:

<http://oc.hiav.networkrail.co.uk/sites/whsh/Pages>

Safety Hour – vehicle overloading NOTES

Weight limits –

Do you know where the vehicle manufacturer plate is?

A – Usually in the door frame on the near-side or below the seat

Discussions points –

How do you know when a vehicle is over-weight?

A – Back end of the vehicle sloping down to the rear.

A – Rear springs bending the wrong way

A – Gap between tyre and mudguard much reduced

A – Tyres may look under-inflated

A – the handling of the vehicle will be affected

What would be affected by a vehicle being overloaded?

A – Handling / brakes less effective / clutch may be burnt out / suspension bottoming out or failing / chassis damage / steering too heavy or too light / tyres may fail / higher fuel consumption / damage to road surfaces / insurance may be compromised, etc

How & when would you check the weight of your vehicle?

A – Weigh-bridges – all towns & cities have a weighbridge, usually at a recycling centre or ministry HGV test centre, plus some commercial ones. They usually don't charge if you don't need a printed weight ticket.

A – Some depots have a set of portable weigh-pads. Instruction on how to use these is available through your RSM

A – Every time the vehicle is driven there is a chance that it could be overloaded, either on its way out or on its way back. Experience of what is a 'good' load and what is a 'bad' load can be gained by regular vehicle weighing. Carrying only kit and tools that are likely to be actually used rather than carrying numerous items 'just in case'.