



SAFETY ASSESSMENT
FEDERATION

Owner / User Guidance

Guidance for Fork Lift Truck Owners

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General

This information sheet contains guidance notes on good practice for the maintenance and safety of fork lift trucks. The status of this guidance note is advisory and not mandatory, unless the note indicates that it is included in the legislation. It is designed to assist Fork Lift Truck owners in identifying their responsibilities. They are intended to supplement the relevant legislation(1) and guidance(2) advised by the Health and Safety Executive. This note does not include or provide advice on use, risk assessments by the owner or operator and supervision of lifting operations.

Fork Lift Trucks

Generally and unless equipment is provided for private use unrelated to the workplace, it is likely that Fork Lift Trucks would be recognised as workplace equipment and subject to the appropriate legislation(1). Also included would be equipment, accessories and associated ties, bolts, eyes, cages, chains and fixing equipment designed for lifting use with the Fork Lift Truck.

General Responsibilities

The main legal responsibilities are designed to ensure the safe use and operation of the Fork Lift Truck. This includes fitness for purpose, proper use, lifting operations, operator training and competence, safe equipment through servicing, maintenance and inspection and associated record keeping. Employers and those responsible for the workplace have responsibilities for their employees and other persons working on their site. Employees also have responsibilities in respect of their actions and also to report dangerous or potentially dangerous activity. In addition, owners/employers have specific legal responsibilities to ensure work equipment is properly maintained and, where legislated, undergo a thorough examination.

Thorough Examination

All lifting equipment are subject to the Health and Safety and Work Act, notably Regulations pertaining to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) which states that any lifting equipment, fixed or mobile, which includes fork lift trucks, will require a thorough examination by a competent person at certain periods and after significant repair or modification to the equipment to assess its continued safety. This is more than just an inspection of equipment assessing its condition at the time of examination. The thorough examination requires a full risk assessment of its safety and suitability for purpose and includes use, the environment, rate of deterioration and other influencing factors as well as the condition of the equipment.

This is normally carried out by an engineer surveyor, who is specifically trained and competent to undertake such tasks. In addition, the thorough examination should not be confused with maintenance or servicing although some activities may be similar. The thorough examination may provide a check that maintenance is being carried out but is not intended to replace it.

Any competent person can carry out a thorough examination, but the owner/employer is responsible for ensuring the person is competent as provided in the Health and Safety and Work Act, notably Regulations

pertaining to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER). SAFed member companies accredited to ISO/IEC 17020 are deemed competent inspection bodies. It is also recommended that the competent person is also sufficiently independent and impartial to allow objective decisions to be made. Independence in this case means a separate organisation or reporting chain from other services on the truck such as servicing, maintenance, hire or supply (manufacture).

It is particularly important that the person carrying out the thorough examination should not be the same person servicing or maintaining the equipment, as they would be checking their own work. SAFed full member companies are fully independent and recruit, train and only employ competent persons, being accredited to the international standard(4) by the sole government approved accreditation body (UKAS).

The legal requirement from a thorough examination is a completed report in accordance with the Health and Safety and Work Act, notably Regulations pertaining to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) as soon as is practicable. This report should list general particulars of the owner, premises, truck etc, type of examination and periodicity and associated tests carried out together with the results of any defects identified which are or could become a danger to persons, repairs required and due date. The report should be signed by the competent person or his representative, dated and indicate the date when the next thorough examination is due.

The competent person may add other notes, advice, minor defects not amounting to a danger to persons or recommendations as appropriate. The report should be kept by the owner/duty holder until the next thorough examination and for two years as an audit trail should the local authority or HSE request this. There is no legal requirement to have a 'sticker' on the fork lift truck or specific check list of tests carried out or any other certificate or documentation other than that specified in Health and Safety at Work Act.

Other Relevant Information

Further information, including details of HSE publications can be obtained from the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk

Safety Assessment Federation (SAFed)

The Safety Assessment Federation (SAFed) is the trade association, for the independent engineering inspection and certification industry. All SAFed Full Member Companies are accredited by the government approved United Kingdom Accreditation Service(UKAS) to the formal international standards to provide thorough examination services by a competent person to national regulations (1).

They only carry out the statutory and non statutory thorough examinations and do not maintain, service, supply or manufacture equipment, ensuring customers receive fully independent, comprehensive and professional service free from any conflicting interests. SAFed also provides advice, guidelines and publications, acknowledged as best practice within the industry.

For more information or to find a SAFed Member company visit the find a member company on the website.

Promoting Safety | Reducing Risk | Adding Value



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