



Information on Practical Driving Assessment for the Authorisation to Drive Heavy Combination Class Vehicles

The heavy combination driving assessment requires applicants to demonstrate competence in the knowledge and skills to control this class of vehicle.

There are 4 parts to the assessment which will be conducted over a two hour duration :

- conducting a pre-trip vehicle inspection
- on-road assessment (1 Hour)
- conducting an uncoupling and coupling procedure
- conducting a mid-trip vehicle inspection

Failure to demonstrate competence in any part of the assessment will result in failure of the overall assessment.

The assessment will be discontinued when:	The assessor will record 'Not Met Standard' when:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the judgement of the assessor, the candidate is not capable of taking the assessment • Candidate's vehicle is not roadworthy • Candidate's vehicle is not appropriate for the class or type of licence assessment • The vehicle breaks down during the assessment • A bribe or inducement is offered • In the judgement of the assessor, something that would not normally be present during assessment adversely affects the authenticity, fairness, reliability or validity of the assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessor has to intervene or give assistance to avoid a potentially dangerous situation • Candidate disobeys a mandatory sign • Candidate exceeds the speed limit • Candidate disobeys any traffic regulation that immediately or potentially threatens safety • Candidate drives without wearing a seatbelt • Candidate fails to respond to a crisis or potential crisis that would normally be anticipated by an experienced driver • Candidate causes a crisis or potential crisis • Candidate removes both hands from the steering wheel while the vehicle is in motion • Candidate drives with 1/3 of the vehicle or more on the incorrect side of the road in any situation (other than turns) • Candidate refuses to attempt any part of the assessment • Candidate refuses to follow any reasonable direction given by the assessor

Minimum standard assessment vehicles that may be used to show ability to control a heavy combination class vehicle.

- **A prime mover** with :
 3 axles and a gross vehicle mass exceeding 15 tonnes, attached to a semi-trailer with at least 2 axles, having an unladen mass exceeding 4,500 kilograms, a gross vehicle mass of not less than 16 tonnes and a length of not less than 10 metres.
 Vehicle combination to have a minimum on-road mass of 28 tonnes.
- **A heavy rigid vehicle** with :
 three or more axles and a gross vehicle mass of more than 15 tonnes, attached to a trailer with an unladen mass exceeding 4,500 kilograms, a gross vehicle mass of not less than 16 tonnes, and a length not less than 7 metres.
 Vehicle combination to have a minimum on-road mass of 29 tonnes.

CONDUCTING A PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

STAGES and KEY POINTS

<p>1. Vehicle posture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Conduct visual inspection to ensure vehicle is correctly postured * Check condition of and for excessive wear of suspension * Ensure suspension securely fixed * Look for rust and corrosion * Check load is evenly and correctly distributed in accordance with vehicle manufactures and company instructions and is secure 	<p>13. Couplings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure trailer couplings are free from damage, cracks or excessive wear * Ensure trailer couplings are securely fitted * Check for rust and corrosion * Check couplings operate correctly
<p>2. Drive belts and pulleys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check pulleys for damage and wear * Check operation of belts for looseness, cracking, fraying or cuts 	<p>14. Entry steps and grab handles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Look for excessive wear and damage * Ensure they are securely fitted * Check for rust and corrosion
<p>3. Leaks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check under vehicle for visible signs of oil, water, hydraulic or fuel leaks * Checks air hoses for leaks 	<p>15. Tools, bars, ropes and chains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure all tools, bars, ropes and chains are serviceable * Check they are securely stowed
<p>4. Fluid levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure fluid levels for oil, water, battery, clutch and brake (if applicable) conform to maker's and company requirements 	<p>16. Instruments and gauges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Activate instruments and gauges and monitor for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical charging • Oil pressure (follow maker's instructions re time to correct pressure) • Coolant temperature • Exhaust temperature • Engine oil temperature • Air pressure • Fuel quantity • Ancillary monitors * If applicable also check: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive axle oil temperature • Gearbox oil temperature • Coolant level, coolant temperature • low engine oil pressure • audible warning device
<p>5. Tyre wear and inflation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate and even inflation • Visible damage • Legal tread depth • Abnormal wear patterns • Tyre compatibility • Rocks lodged between duals • Dual tyres touching 	<p>17. Windscreen washers/ wipers, horn, doors, hatches and latches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check for correct operation of wipers and washers ensuring wipers are not activated onto a dry windscreen * Sound horn to check operation * Operate all doors and hatches to ensure all latches, hinges and locks function efficiently
<p>6. Mudflaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure that the mudflaps are correctly fitted and undamaged 	<p>18. Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check that the windscreen is not chipped, scored, cracked or stone grazed * Ensure clear vision through the windscreen, side/rear windows and all mirrors
<p>7. Air tanks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check for rust and corrosion * Open drain vent * Drain foreign matter from tank * Close vent 	<p>19. Emergency equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check that the fire extinguishers and seat belts conform with legal requirements * Ensure warning triangles are readily available
<p>8. Body damage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Walk around the vehicle and conduct a visual inspection for body damage * Check for excessive rust and corrosion 	<p>20. Seats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure seats are securely fitted * Check for correct operation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slide adjustment lever • Height adjustment lever • Back rest adjustment lever • Lumber support adjustment lever • Tilt adjustment lever • Seat
<p>9. Wheels and nuts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Inspect all wheels and nuts (including spares) for tightness, damaged/ bent loose lugs and cracks * Ensure the correct number and type of nuts are fitted * Check for rust and rust trails 	<p>21. Cab cleanliness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure cab meets acceptable community cleanliness standards * Secure loose objects
<p>10. Lights and indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Switch on all lights and check: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headlights high/low beam • Park/clearance lights • Number plate lights • Brake lights • Indicator/ hazard lights * Ensure all lenses are clean and conform to legal requirements 	<p>22. Paperwork</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check required company and legal documentation (permits) is stowed in the cab * Ensure driver's responsibility is fulfilled and appropriate documents completed and signed
<p>11. Registration label and signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure the registration label is current and clearly displayed * Check mandatory signage is fitted in accordance with legal requirements and is clearly displayed 	<p>23. Vehicle dimensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read driver's manual to ensure that the vehicle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Height • Weight • Length is accurately known
<p>12. Turntable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check that the turntable release handle is in the locked position if trailer is on, or open if only prime mover * Check that the jaws are properly locked around the kingpin * Check that the turntable plate is greased 	

CONDUCTING A COUPLING PROCEDURE

<i>STAGES and KEY POINTS</i>	
<p>1. Position vehicle just forward of the trailer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Stop the vehicle close to but without touching the trailer * Ensure vehicle and trailer are in a straight line * Secure the vehicle 	<p>7. Connect air hoses and electrical cables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure the air hoses are connected and supported to avoid damage * Ensure electrical cables are connected and supported to avoid damage * Ensure cables and hoses cannot become caught in the tail shaft * Engage the locking device to prevent loss of power to the trailer on the road * Check the cable for faults * Secure all lines and cable away from moving parts of the vehicle * On some vehicles air supply line taps may need to be switched on
<p>2. Ensure the trailer is secure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Chock the front and back of the trailer wheels on both sides * Ensure the spring brakes are on 	<p>8. Activate trailer brakes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Apply and release the trailer brakes to check their operation
<p>3. Check trailer skid plate, kingpin, turntable, airlines and electrical cables for damage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure the turntable is tilted back and the jaws are open * If the trailer has a block welded to the skid plate about 30cm behind the kingpin, ensure the top of the turntable is the type that turns and is unlocked * Ensure that the top of the turntable is well greased when used in the locked position 	<p>9. Secure vehicle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Apply the parking brake * Visually inspect the coupling by looking under the semi trailer * Check that the turntable jaws have engaged on the shaft, not the head of the kingpin * Ensure there is no space between the upper and lower parts of the turntable * Check that the locking lever has moved to the locked position * Check that the safety catch is in place over the locking lever
<p>4. Check trailer height</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure that the height of the trailer skid plate is slightly lower than the centre of the turntable. (Approximately 5 centimetres lower than the centre of the turntable is recommended) * Ensure that the kingpin and turntable are aligned 	<p>10. Raise landing gear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Continue winding until it is fully raised * Use low gear until the supports are away from the ground, then change to high gear * Ensure the handle is correctly stowed
<p>5. Slowly reverse the vehicle under the trailer or to trailer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Avoid jarring the trailer by moving the vehicle slowly * Stop immediately the turntable jaws lock around the kingpin * Raise the landing gear so it just clears the ground 	<p>11. Conduct clearance check</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check that there is sufficient space between the vehicle (frame and wheels) and the trailer frame * Check that there is sufficient space between the landing gear and the rear of the truck frame to allow for turning
<p>6. Perform tug test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check that the trailer is locked on by attempting to move off in first gear with the trailer brakes on * Repeat above to ensure trailer is locked on * Raise Landing Gear completely off ground 	<p>12. Conduct air leak and trailer lights check</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Run engine until the air pressure has reached its maximum in the air tanks * Switch off the engine, fully apply the trailer brakes and walk around the vehicle listening for air leaks * Check all lights and other electrical equipment on the trailer
	<p>13. Remove and stow wheel chocks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure chocks are stowed securely in a safe place

CONDUCTING A UNCOUPLING PROCEDURE

<i>STAGES and KEY POINTS</i>	
<p>1. Level and firm surface</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Conduct visual inspection to ensure the ground upon which the vehicle is parked is level * Check that the ground is firm enough to support the trailer landing gear and load * Ensure the vehicle and trailer are in a straight line 	<p>5. Lower landing gear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure supports are firmly in contact with the ground * Use strong timber or other flat supports if in any doubt as to the firmness of the ground * Vehicle will raise until the trailer weight is taken by the landing gear * Stop cranking when a slight gap is visible between the trailer skid plate and the fifth wheel
<p>2. Apply trailer brakes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Back up gently to ease pressure on the kingpin 	<p>6. Disconnect air hoses and electrical cables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure the air hoses are stowed in a secure place at the rear of the vehicle making sure they are kept free from dust * Ensure electrical cables are stowed in a secure place at the rear of the vehicle making sure they are kept free of water * Ensure cables and hoses cannot become caught in the tail shaft * On some vehicle air supply line taps may need to be switched off
<p>3. Secure vehicle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Apply the park brake 	<p>7. Release turntable jaws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Raise the release handle lock pin and pull the handle to open position * Keep legs and feet away from the rig to avoid injury in case the rig moves * If the handle will not move - see 2 (Key points)
<p>4. Chock trailer wheels (if no maxi brakes are fitted)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Should not be necessary on flat ground but are always a sensible precaution If on a grade: * Chock the wheels * Chock the front axle of the semi-trailer 	<p>8. Move vehicle forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Before separation double check that the hoses and cables are disconnected * Release vehicle parking brake and move forward until the turntable is clear of the skid plate * Ensure vehicle is stopped with its frame still under the trailer * Secure vehicle and confirm that the ground is supporting the trailer * Drive vehicle clear of the trailer

CONDUCTING A MID- TRIP INSPECTION

<i>STAGES and KEY POINTS</i>	
<p>1. Vehicle posture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Conduct visual inspection to ensure vehicle is correctly postured * Check condition of and for excessive wear of suspension * Ensure suspension securely fixed * Check load is evenly and correctly distributed and is secure 	<p>5. Lights and indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Switch on all lights and check: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headlights high/low beam • Park/clearance lights • Number plate lights • Brake lights • Indicator/hazard lights * Ensure all lenses are clean and conform to legal requirements
<p>2. Leaks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check under vehicle for visible signs of oil, water, hydraulic or fuel leaks * Check air hoses for leaks 	<p>6. Signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check mandatory signage is fitted in accordance with legal requirements and is clearly displayed
<p>3. Wheels and tyres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate and even inflation • Visible damage • Legal tread depth • Abnormal wear patterns • Rocks lodged between duals • Dual tyres touching • Temperature • Brakes for excessive heat * Inspect all wheels and nuts (including spares) for tightness, damaged/ bent, loose lugs and cracks 	<p>7. Couplings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check trailer couplings/points of articulation for wear and damage
<p>4. Mudflaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure that the mudflaps are correctly fitted and undamaged 	<p>8. Tools, bars, ropes and chains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check they are securely stowed
	<p>9. Vision and cab cleanliness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure clear vision through the windscreen, side/ rear windows and all mirrors * Ensure cab meets acceptable community cleanliness standards * Secure loose objects

CONDUCTING AN ON-ROAD ASSESSMENT

<i>STAGES and KEY POINTS</i>	
<p>1. Prepares to drive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Legal requirements are confirmed (registration, permits current) * Cabin drill is performed * Mirrors are adjusted for maximum vision * Correct seat adjustment and driving posture * Climate control and demisters set * Seat belt is secured and adjusted * Engine is started * Monitors instruments and switches * Braking system is confirmed * Mobile checks are conducted * Monitors and uses instruments and switches 	<p>5. Manages the gears</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Gears are changed smoothly * Appropriate gear for speed and driving conditions * Gear changes completed primarily travelling in straight line * Adjusts speed before changing to lower gear * Appropriate gear is selected before descending gradient * Skip changes gears where appropriate
<p>2. Manages the accelerator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Accelerator applied/released smoothly * Accelerator is used to maintain a selected speed * Accelerator is used to counteract the effects of a gradient * Progressive acceleration is used in corners and bends 	<p>6. Uses and coordinates inputs (coordinates vehicle controls)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Braking * Steering * Acceleration
<p>3. Manages the brakes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Braking is performed efficiently * Braking is smooth and steady * Desired stopping point is reached accurately 	<p>7. Uses safe driving procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Mirrors are checked before vehicle slows or brakes are applied * Mirrors checked, signals used before moving laterally or turning * Complies with the road rules in the road traffic system * Driving manoeuvres are completed in a legal and timely manner * Negotiates the road and traffic system * Interacts with traffic * Drives efficiently in the traffic system
<p>4. Manages the steering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Steering smoothly and consistent with desired path * Vehicle steered with both hands unless operating controls * In a straight line, an accurate course is maintained * In curves, an accurate course is maintained * Hands positioned correctly on steering wheel 	<p>8. Reversing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Legal requirements are complied with * Mirrors/signals used, rear blind spot (if appropriate) checked * Safety and legality of manoeuvre is checked * Appropriate starting position is selected * Observations are maintained * Precise directional and speed control is maintained * Positions vehicle accurately
	<p>9. Forward parallel park</p>