

Fleet manager

You are responsible for ensuring the roadworthiness of the vehicles operated by your company and the safety of the drivers who drive them.

Tractor units and trailers should be suitable for the duty they have to perform. You should ensure that trailers are not used to transport unsuitable loads. For example, steel coils are best transported in trailers with built-in coil wells or similar containment systems, rather than general-purpose flatbeds and curtain-sided trailers.

When buying a new and second-hand vehicle, ensure that it is suitable for the loads you are likely to carry. The vehicle buyer's guide may help you in selecting the right trailer for your needs. The curtains and weather-protection structure of a curtain-sided trailer are not normally suitable for load containment or for attaching load restraint equipment to. Webbing straps suspended from rails in the roof of a trailer are not load restraint equipment.

If loads are to be secured using webbing straps and/or chains, you need to ensure that they can be secured either directly to the chassis of the trailer, or to rated attachment points. Rope hooks are not suitable attachment points. Straps and chains should not be used in the same assembly.

Trailers can be damaged by loads they carry, external impact damage, wear and tear and vandalism. You should ensure that damaged trailers are repaired so that their strength is not affected.

It is important to secure the load on a vehicle both to prevent damage to the load and vehicle and reduce the risk of injury. You should ensure that loads are secured on your vehicles – this may be done by the driver or the loader, depending on the loading arrangements.

You should ensure that your drivers are able to get help and advice if they have a problem with the load shifting on the road. It can be dangerous for a driver to access the trailer and rearrange a shifted load alone at the roadside.