



Vehicles rollaway guidance for the parcel carrying industry



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Rollaway Guidance

Introduction

PCSA recognises that managing safety in transport operations must be a priority for our industry to protect the health and wellbeing of our personnel, our customers, the public and any other person who may be affected by our activities.

Drivers involved in collection and delivery operations undertake multiple stops at a variety of locations daily. Each time drivers park and exit their vehicle they are exposed to the risk of that vehicle moving unintentionally or running away. All commercial vehicles used by our member organisations are fitted with braking systems to prevent movement when parked.

Vehicle rollaway, or run away as it may also be referred to, can occur as a result of mechanical failure of these braking systems but is more likely to occur as a result of driver error, through failure to activate the braking system.

The vehicle will keep moving until it hits something bigger or heavier and the consequences can be catastrophic for both the individual and the organisation involved but also for our customers and the general public who we interact with daily. Vehicle rollaway can, and does, result in severe vehicle or property damage and in the most serious circumstances fatal injuries.

Much of the available guidance focuses on coupling and uncoupling procedures with an emphasis on driver error and training to reduce the risk. There is, however, little guidance available on what should be in place to mitigate the effects of driver error.

PCSA recognises that due to the variety of vehicles, locations and conditions involved it is impossible to provide specific guidance on all parking situations. As such this guidance document provides an overview of the issues encountered by PCSA members in relation to vehicle parking operations and some of the measures available to reduce the risk.

Types of Rollaway

Creep

This term is used to describe a situation whereby a vehicle parked in a loading position or on a loading bay moves a small distance from that loading position. This can be caused by powered Material Handling Equipment (MHE) entering the vehicle/trailer at speed, braking harshly within the vehicle/trailer or when reversing out of the vehicle/trailer. This can cause a vehicle or trailer to move forward slightly and cause a gap to form between it and the loading bay or ramp.

Running vehicle

This type of rollaway is more commonly associated with articulated vehicles during the coupling process when the driver has failed to apply the tractor unit parking brake. It must be stressed however, that this can also occur with rigid vehicles or if there is a mechanical failure in the braking system. There are very few perfectly level working environments and an un-braked vehicle will rollaway with only the slightest gradient, particularly if loaded.

Note: Parking a vehicle on un-level ground presents the environment & opportunity for vehicle rollaway.

Risk Assessment

Each organisation must ensure that vehicle parking and in particular the potential for vehicle rollaway is considered as part of a robust risk assessment. The risk assessment should consider the vehicle, the driver and where possible the likely parking locations.

Consideration should be given to engineering controls on the vehicles used, physical controls at base, collection and delivery locations, driver training, experience, familiarity and the variation in controls in replacement vehicles.

Organisations should consider the risks associated with mechanical failure of control systems but also the failure of drivers to apply parking brakes on rigid vehicles, tractor units and trailers, no matter how well trained or experienced they are.

Engineering Controls



The greatest risk is presented during the coupling of articulated vehicle and trailer combinations. During this operation the driver undertakes activities at the side of the vehicle and/or on the catwalk behind the cab. There is potential for the combination to move, if the tractor unit parking brake has not been applied, when the trailer brake is disengaged or when the red emergency line is connected.

Many drivers, perhaps as a result of instinct or in order to cover up the initial error, attempt to return to the cab to apply the parking brake. However, a slip, trip, fall or entrapment against a fixed object can result in fatal injuries. To reduce the risk through engineering controls, organisations should consider:

- Relocating the trailer park brake, normally situated near to the landing legs, to make it easier to operate from a place of safety.
- Modifying the trailer braking system to allow it to be operated from within the cab.
- Fit warning devices/alarms to the cab to activate if the door is opened without the application of the parking brake. Many manufacturers now fit these as standard but the volume of the warning may require adjustment to ensure it is sufficient to be noticeable in all situations.



Organisations need to consider not only owned or leased vehicles but also vehicles that may be used as replacement vehicles, short term hire vehicles and loan vehicles from suppliers as these vehicles may not be supplied with the same engineering control measures that may normally be specified for owned or leased vehicles.

Organisations must also ensure that all drivers, including agency drivers, operating any vehicle, are familiar with the correct method of operating the available engineering controls.

Physical Controls

It is impossible for organisations in our industry to risk assess all parking locations as many are not within our control. We must, however, consider the implementation of physical controls at locations within our control. Even within our own locations there will be a variety of parking locations including loading/unloading points, trailer parking bays, vehicle wash areas, fuel points, access and egress points etc.

To reduce the risk through physical controls organisations should consider:

- The implementation of trailer locking systems that secure the trailer in position and can be interlinked with the loading door,
- Surfaces in loading, unloading and parking areas are as flat as possible.
- Installation of vehicle stops to reduce the potential for movement,
- Use of wheel chocks by drivers.
- Application of the Highway Code in particular when parking on a slope, in addition to applying the handbrake, ignition is switched off, selected low gear engaged, wheels turned to kerb.



Systems and Procedures

The principle of having Safe Systems of Work (SSoW) has been with us for a long time. The controls identified in the risk assessment should be built into a formally documented process or Safe System of Work that can be trained to all relevant persons involved. Organisations must always consider whether or not the prescribed system will create any additional risk, e.g. when and where and how wheel chocks are fitted, and the risks of the procedure not being followed.

Organisations should consider whether one SSoW is appropriate for all personnel or locations. It may be necessary to create a number of SSoW for coupling and uncoupling operations as the process differs when using a shunt unit rather than a standard tractor unit.

Whatever physical or engineering controls are used these need to be identified in the systems of work and trained to the persons carrying out the tasks. These systems need regular review to ensure they remain accurate.

Awareness and Training



Organisations within our industry need to ensure that all persons in charge of vehicles or vehicle operations are aware of the risks involved and have received formal training in all relevant risk control measures and procedures. Refresher training should be conducted periodically to ensure that the information is retained.

To support training on systems and controls, organisations should consider the installation of signage to maintain awareness amongst those undertaking and managing transport operations. Effective supervision can also ensure the implementation of agreed control measures.

Organisations within our industry must reduce the risks associated with parking operations as far as possible but must remember that controls and systems can only be effective if they are implemented by drivers and those with responsibility for supervising or managing transport operations.

For further information, please visit www.parcelcarriersafety.com or on Twitter  @safetyparcel