

**TotalProduce™**

Let's Grow Together



**Drivers  
Handbook  
Irish Edition  
2017/2018**



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## **Section 1 – Introduction**

The Board of Directors for Total Produce Ltd is committed to ensuring the safe and legal operation of our company vehicles. Adherence to the company Drivers Fleet Handbook will reduce the risk of operating illegally and will ensure compliance with our Operator's Licence Undertakings.

Driving for work purposes is a significant part of many employees working day and so it is the purpose of the following handbook is to supply drivers with a central point of reference, to encourage higher standards of road safety and provide sample documents to assist in meeting your duties.

Each Driver has a duty to comply with the requirements of this handbook and ensure that their duties are carried out in a safe and competent manor at all times. Remember that, as a driver, you are responsible for the constant assessment of the vehicle you drive. You must ensure as far as possible that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition at all times.

At all times you should comply with Road Traffic and Health and Safety Regulations, the company believes that safe driving of its vehicles is a vital element in each employee's ability to perform their particular job effectively. Each driver must therefore maintain the highest standard of driving and safety by observing traffic regulations and company policy. Drivers should at all times be courteous, caring and considerate in both your dealings with customers and other road users, and are seen to be clean and hygienic in both your appearance and work methods. Inconsiderate or unhygienic conduct by a driver can undo the good efforts of the sales and operational team who are responsible for obtaining the order, receiving stock and loading vehicles.

Any deliberate or negligent actions that result in breaches of our Operator's Licence conditions and undertakings or Health and Safety

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policies will be taken seriously and where appropriate will result in the use of formal disciplinary procedures.

In conclusion, should you have any queries or doubts with regard to transport related issues, please contact your Transport Manager or Transport Nominated Representative.

**It is the policy of Total Produce to operate its commercial vehicle fleet in a professional and legal manner at all times. With each Operator's Licence issued we agree undertakings and commitments, some of which are directly influenced by you the driver:**

- Rules on driver's hours and tachographs are observed and proper records kept.
- Vehicles and trailers are not overloaded.
- Vehicles will operate within speed limits.
- Vehicles and trailers, including hired vehicle and trailers are kept fit and serviceable.
- Drivers report promptly any defects or symptoms of defects that could prevent the safe operation of vehicles and trailers, and that any defects are promptly recorded in writing.

**This handbook does not cover every circumstance that may occur and should be used as a general guide only. In addition to the safe, legal and efficient execution of your duties there is an emphasis on consideration and courtesy to other road users, pedestrians and customers. If in doubt as to any aspect of your duties contact your manager at the earliest opportunity.**

## **Section 2 - Driver Licensing**

A person, who holds a driving licence issued by a competent authority of a member state of the European communities other than Ireland, may drive in a public place any vehicle in a category in respect of which the licence has been granted and for the period for which such a licence has effect.

All drivers are responsible for ensuring they hold a current driving licence applicable to the type of vehicle that they drive. If disqualified or convicted of a driving offence even if the offence relates to a private vehicle outside of work you must report this to your Transport Manager or Nominated Transport Representative.

Total Produce Policy requires all drivers to complete a driver's declaration regarding their health every twelve months as confirmation they are fit to drive. **See appendix A Drivers Health Declaration.**

Certain prescriptions and over the counter drugs have the potential to cause adverse side effects such as drowsiness. Normally there would be a written warning on the bottle or in the instructions informing of the possible side effects. Drivers are expected to take notice of any such warnings that accompany medications. Drivers should seek further advice from their GP / Pharmacist and also discuss any adverse effect with their line manager.

To drive with excess alcohol in your blood is an offence, extremely dangerous and carries severe penalties. You will be subject to immediate disciplinary action by the company, which could mean the loss of your job.

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Eye tests are required at two yearly intervals for all employees driving company vehicles. Confirmation of an up to date eye test is required on the driver Health Declaration.

The Driver CPC is needed for all drivers who drive vehicles over 3500kg GVW, Your CPC card must be carried with you at all times whilst driving a commercial vehicle.

### **Section 3 - General Rules All Vehicles**

Drivers are required and are responsible for ensuring that any vehicle supplied by the company is:

- Kept clean inside and out, local branch rules will apply on how and when your vehicle is cleaned.
- Not modified in any way which will alter the standard design of the vehicle. Not driven in a dangerous, reckless or illegal manner.
- Not driven when in a dangerous or illegal condition or in a condition which may cause the mechanical failure of the vehicle.
- Kept secure at all times.
  
- In relation to commercial vehicles – Checked in accordance with the company issued Daily Record / Vehicle Check / Defect Notification, ensuring all items are functioning correctly, not damaged and wherever possible checked for compliance with legislation. By law the driver is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle's tires meet the minimum legal requirements. Tires in an illegal condition will automatically invalidate the vehicles insurance cover.
- Gross vehicle weights should be identified and never exceeded.

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The only individuals who are authorised to drive the company's commercial vehicles are:

- Drivers engaged in carrying out authorised duties for the company provided that they possess a current driving license of the type required for the vehicle and do not have a medical condition which could compromise the companies insurance.

The only individuals who are authorised to travel as passengers in the company's commercial vehicles are:

- Employees and agency or contract drivers engaged in carrying out authorized duties for the company.
- An authorized garage employee involved in a road test or repair of the vehicle.
- Any person who has received permission from the Depot Manager, Transport Manager.

Company commercial vehicles will not be available for private use under any circumstances

Your vehicle may be fitted with equipment to help you with your daily delivery duties. Items such as door retainers, rear steps and grab handles for the rear cargo area and cab should all be used at all times if fitted. Your walk round checks for first use of the vehicle will include these items and although they do not form part of the mechanical checks they will form part of the Health and Safety checks. If these or any other Health and Safety related items are found to be damaged, lose or missing they should be reported to your line manager immediately in the same way as a mechanical fault. If these items fail, although not an immediate danger to other road users, they could be a serious danger to you. Rear Cargo doors swinging back onto you as you are unloading will cause injury as would stepping on to a rear step that collapsed because it was damaged.

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Remember Health and Safety it is your responsibility when carrying out your duties.

Drivers must make every attempt to abide by loading / unloading restrictions.

No fines will be approved or paid by the company where a driver has failed to abide by loading / unloading restrictions.

Only in exceptional circumstances will fines be accepted by the company.

Only in exceptional circumstances will wheel clamp removal or tow away fees be accepted by the company.

Tolls expenses incurred on company business will be accepted by the company.

It is an offence to drive a vehicle in a position which does not give proper control of the vehicle or a full view of the road and traffic ahead. This offence covers a multitude of situations which include:

- Pressing the keys on a hands-free phone
- Talking to passengers in the vehicle
- Using satellite navigation systems
- Changing a CD or the radio station



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Drivers of commercial vehicles will not use mobile phones, hand held or hands free, while they are driving; this includes voice calls, texting, email or the use of any other function or application capability that the mobile phone may have. If fitted, a hands free facility may be used to provide a convenient way of using the mobile phone when the vehicle is stopped and the engine is turned off.

Drivers will check for messages and respond at each delivery whilst parked, or as otherwise instructed by their Transport Manager.

Drivers will only use satellite navigation units approved by the Transport Manager. The unit must not be located anywhere on the windscreen, or anywhere else, that would cause an obstruction to your clear vision. Units must not be adjusted in any way whilst driving. If the unit needs to be altered you must pull over, when safe to do so, before making any necessary alterations.

The wearing of seat belts is compulsory. Road safety consideration suggest that if a seat belt is fitted, it should be worn no matter how short the journey.

All work places that are enclosed must be smoke free; this applies to all commercial vehicles. Your branch will have a policy in place that sets out where (if anywhere) employees are permitted to smoke.

## **Section 4 - Loading / Unloading**

Loading and unloading is only allowed on single yellow lines in accordance with the local authority time limits, unless any other loading and unloading restriction applies.

Loading and unloading by commercial vehicle is permitted in designated loading bays – normally for a maximum of 20 minutes. Always check the hours that the loading bay operates on nearby signs.

Loading and unloading is permitted without payment in parking bays such as resident bays and meters etc., but only for 20 minutes. Never load and unload in a suspended, doctors or disabled bays.

Vehicles should not be parked with one or more wheels on the footpath to load or unload unless the loading / unloading could not otherwise have been satisfactorily performed and the vehicle was not left unattended at any time while parked.

Other places where we cannot stop to load and unload are:

- A pedestrian crossing including zigzag lines.
- School keep clear signs.
- On a road with double white lines marked in the center.
- A clearway during its hours of operation.
- Mandatory cycle lanes.
- Where the vehicle would cause an obstruction, or be in a dangerous position.

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## **Section 5 - Drivers Hours**

Drivers of all commercial vehicles from small vans to large LGV's are subject to driver hours rules. There are two sets of rules commonly called domestic rules and tachograph or EU rules.

Any driver who drives a vehicle which exceeds 3500kg will be subject to EU driver hours and tachograph rules. Drivers driving vehicles 3500kg and below will be subject to domestic rules.

### **5.1 Domestic Rules**

Vehicles up to and including a GVW of 3500kg:

- Maximum daily driving = 9 Hours.
- Maximum daily duty = 11 Hours.

There is no legislative requirement to take breaks from driving or a weekly rest. However, the general guideline on how breaks should be taken is a break of at least 15 minutes for every 2 Hours of driving.

If, at any time a driver operates a vehicle fitted with a tachograph, it is Company policy that the driver will then be subject to EU tachograph regulations for the balance of the working week. This will avoid the confusion of 'mixed driving'.

## 5.2 EU Tachograph Rules

These regulations control driving hours, breaks, duties and rests for drivers where goods are carried in vehicles which exceed 3500kg GVW.

- The fixed week extends from 00:00 Hrs Monday to 24:00 Hrs Sunday.
- The maximum permitted driving period is 4.5 hours before a driver is legally required to take a break.
- Having completed 4.5 hours constant or accumulative driving, a driver must stop and take a break of not less than 45 Minutes. During this time no other duties are to be carried out. This break, however, may be split into 2 periods within the 4.5 hours driving, the first of 15 minutes and the other of 30 minutes. Breaks of less than 15 minutes do not qualify.
- The maximum driving during any one day is 9 hours, i.e. 2 periods of 4.5 hours. This may be extended to 10 Hours for any 2 days during a fixed week. In this case a further 45 minute break will be required prior to the final hour of driving.
- Maximum Weekly Driving - Six consecutive daily driving shifts.
- Maximum Fortnightly Driving - A Driver's total hours driven must not exceed 90 hours in any two-week period.
- Daily Rest - Driving + other work + breaks must not total more than 13 hours with a minimum rest before starting a new shift of 11 hours. This can be reduced three times between any two weekly rest periods to a minimum of 9 hours continuous rest; this is known as a reduced daily rest period.

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- Weekly Rest - 45 hours reducible to a minimum of 24 hours. In any two week period a driver must take at least two weekly rests, one of which must be at least 45 hours long.

To avoid working both sets of rules, Total Produce has adopted the rule that if a driver drives a tachographed vehicle within a working week then he / she will be subject to tachograph rules and regulations from then on.

A Driver under EU Tachograph regulations must be able to demonstrate that he / she can account for the complete working week regardless whether he / she has driven tachographed, non tachographed vehicles or undertaken other work such as warehouse duties or rest days. This requires the driver to enter on an analogue chart the start of shift and finish of shift lines on the reverse side of the tachograph chart and manually record work carried out when not driving. Manual tachographs should be completed for days when EU driving rules did not apply. Drivers if using a digital tachograph can make manual entries onto the vehicle unit when inserting the digital card for the first time after the work was carried out.

Total Produce requires all drivers to declare any other work carried out for second employers (as part of the driver's contract of employment) as this may interfere with daily / weekly rest.

### 5.3 Working Time Directive

The Working Time Directive includes drivers subject to tachograph rules and regulations, other mobile workers including drivers on domestic rules and regulations (van drivers), cover / relief drivers and driver's mates subject to tachograph rules and regulations.

#### The Directive States

- You may not work for more than 6 hours without a break.
- A 30 minute break is needed if your total working time is over 6 hours but not more than 9 hours, or a 45 minute break is needed if your total working time is over 9 hours.
- Breaks must interrupt work time – in other words they may not be taken at the very beginning or end of shift. They may be subdivided into periods of at least 15 minutes and spread over the working day. Breaks taken as breaks from driving under tachograph rules can be counted as breaks from working time, and vice versa. When looking at both working time and tachograph rules together, it is important to remember that breaks must be taken after 6 hours work or after 4.5 hours driving, whichever happens soonest. Remember when splitting your tachograph break the first break must be 15 minutes and the second 30 minutes both will satisfy the Working Time Directive Rules.
- When taking a break, drivers may not perform anything that might be regarded as "other work" during this period. Breaks taken under these regulations may be taken at the workstation typically this means the driver's cab.





Tachograph charts / digital cards should show a complete record of a driver's working day, and are likely to be a convenient method of recording working time, breaks, etc. Where non driving activity is undertaken either manual entries on driver tachographs, digital cards or other records, need to be completed.

Tiredness is a significant factor in many road traffic accidents and it is therefore essential that you remain alert at all times whilst driving. The following guidance is designed to help drivers avoid tiredness and remain alert:

- Your route plan should allow sufficient time for you to make the journey and carry out your duties without unnecessary pressure to keep driving when tired. Should you have difficulties with the time allotted in which to complete your route you should speak to your Transport Manager or nominated transport representative?
- Ensure that your journey is effectively planned so that all routes offer sufficient options for rest breaks and where possible alternative routes in the event of congestion.
- You should at least ensure that you adhere to regulations covering driver's hours. Most driving details are likely to be multi-drop and therefore provide appropriate stops.
- If you are feeling drowsy whilst driving, stop at the nearest safe parking area (not a hard shoulder of a motorway) and take a rest. Caffeine and a 10-15 minute nap (no longer) is the proven best method of remaining alert.

**Section 6 - Tachographs**

Tachographs record four different types of driver activity

Driving		This is automatically recorded on most tachographs.
Other work		Covers all activities defined as work other than driving in scope of EU rules. Includes any work for the same or another employer, within or outside the transport sector.
Availability		Covers periods of waiting time, the duration of which is known about in advance. Examples of what might count as a period of availability (POA) are accompanying a vehicle on a ferry crossing or waiting while other workers load/unload your vehicle. For mobile workers driving in a team, a POA would also include time spent sitting next to the driver while the vehicle is in motion (unless taking a break or performing other work, i.e. navigation).
Break/Rest		Covers breaks in work and daily or weekly rest periods. Drivers may not carry out any driving or any other work. Break periods are used exclusively for recuperation. During a rest period a driver must be freely able to use his time.



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Modern charts are interchangeable with most types of analogue tachograph heads but care should still be taken to ensure that the chart meets an approved standard and that the type approved mark on the chart matches that found on the device itself. It is not sufficient that the machine's spindle fits the hole in the centre of the chart.

If you open up the tachograph head inside you will find a number prefixed with the letter e for example e11. This number must appear in the list printed on the reverse side of the chart to be used.

A driver can manually enter other work on an analogue tachograph. This can be recorded using the grid on the back of the chart.

When a driver changes vehicles during the day, the chart must transfer with the driver and the following details entered in relation to the second vehicle:

- Registration number.
- Odometer reading.
- Time of the change of vehicle.

You should then check that the tachograph fitted to the second vehicle is compatible with the chart by checking the e number on the vehicle tachograph with the number on the back of the chart. Provided it is compatible the driver can place the chart in the second vehicle and continue their day. If the original chart is not compatible, you will need to use a new chart but should ensure that a manual entry is made on both charts indicating that two charts were used on this day.

Where a driver uses a vehicle that is outside of the EU rules (no tachograph fitted) they should make manual entries of their activities on

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the reverse of the chart, remember that driving under domestic driver hours rules is counted as other work rather than driving.

When using an analogue tachograph drivers must:

- Check the time is set to the official time of the country in which the vehicle is registered.
- Use a chart compatible with the tachograph.
- Enter centre field details on the chart.
- Ensure the mode is set correctly throughout each shift.
- Produce for inspection by enforcement officers:
  1. The original charts for the current day and previous 28 calendar days.
  2. A digital tachograph card if the driver has one.
  3. Any manual records.
- Return charts to your transport manager each day while keeping with you the previous 28 days records.
- Ensure the equipment is functioning properly.
- Enter manual entries.
- Take care of charts – do not lose them.
- Not withdraw the chart from the vehicle unit until the end of the working day.
- Not make a false entry – any attempt will be easily detected.
- Not leave the chart in for more than 24 hours.
- Not drive a vehicle with another drivers chart inserted.

Should the tachograph stop working and you can prove it is not immediately practicable for the equipment to be repaired, i.e. it is booked in for repair or you are waiting for a part, written records can be kept and you can continue using the vehicle although repairs should be carried out within one week of the fault occurring.

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Digital tachographs work by storing data on the driver and the vehicle in their own memory and recording it separately on a driver's smart card. Driver's cards should be downloaded no later than at 28 day intervals. Good practice is to download cards weekly.

- Drivers must have been issued with a driver's card to drive a vehicle fitted with a digital tachograph.
- Drivers must always use a driver's card while driving a vehicle fitted with a digital tachograph. The vehicle unit records and reports on any periods where it has been driven without one.
- Drivers must only hold one card.
- The card is personal to the driver.
- Drivers must be able to produce their cards (if they hold one) when driving a vehicle on tachograph rules, even one fitted with an analogue system.
- Replacement cards must be applied for within seven calendar days if the original card is lost, stolen, damaged or malfunctioning. It is the responsibility of the driver to do this.
- The RSA may investigate if drivers apply for replacement cards too often.
- Drivers must keep their cards safe and secure at all times.
- Managers should download data from the driver's card at least every 28 days.
- Data should be downloaded immediately before the driver ceases to be employed.
- Driver to record other work as a manual entry on the driver's smart card via the vehicle unit.

The clock inside a digital tachograph always records activities on UTC, a constant worldwide time, regardless of what the display time is set to. Between the last Sunday in March and the last Sunday in October (during British summer time), UK time is one hour ahead of UTC. Drivers must account for this when inputting activity details in the digital tachograph.

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For example, if they carried out other work for two hours before taking over the vehicle between 6am and 8am in June, they must enter this as between 5am and 7am in UTC time.

Printouts provide information on driver activities and vehicle details. Where it is impossible to use the drivers card (lost, stolen or damaged) drivers may drive without the card for a maximum of 15 days provided they produce two printouts (one at the start and one at the end of the journey). Both printouts must be marked with the following:

- Driver's name and card number.
- Manual entries required to show periods of work, rest and availability.
- Driver's signature
- Ensure there are sufficient supplies of print roll.
- Complete any manual data entry records in UTC and confirm the start location, after inserting the driver card.
- Ensure the mode switch is set correctly.
- Report faulty tachographs.
- Make a print out and provide written manual entries if it is impossible for them to use their own card.
- Allow the operator to download data from their card.
- Produce for inspection by enforcement officers:
  1. The original charts for the current day and previous 28 calendar days.
  2. A digital tachograph card if the driver has one.
  3. Any manual records.

Drivers are required to record all other work, including work for other employers, driving days and non-driving days within a fixed week. Where a driver has worked in the warehouse or driven a van in a week and he / she has also driven a tachographed vehicle he / she must record this other work either:

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- Written manually on a chart.
- Written manually on a printout.
- Using the manual input facility on a digital tachograph or using a domestic hour's log book.

Other work includes driving non tachograph vehicles. The driver must also record any periods of availability and should record any break or rest periods.

### 6.1 Log on Procedure

Switch on the ignition.

Insert the driver card in slot 1 with the chip facing upwards and the arrow pointing forwards.

If the vehicle is double manned once Driver 1's card has been read Driver 2 can insert the card in slot 2.

It is then necessary to follow the instruction on the display, which will show the following:

Greeting

Drivers name appears and the date and time the last card was withdrawn – in UTC time unless previously changed to GMT.

There is an option now to make a manual entry relating to any activities that occurred after the last time the card was removed and/or before the card was inserted this time.

All manual entries must be entered on the driver card by using the digital tachograph.

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On the image above we will use the large circular button that has the 'up arrow head', 'down arrow head', 'left arrow - with a dot at its point' and the right hand button marked 'OK'.

**Use 'Up' & 'Down'** to scroll up or down through the main menu and sub-menus as needed.

**Use 'OK' to .....**

- Access the main menu
- Choose selected menu options
- Confirm a selected action

**Use 'left arrow - with a dot at its point' for going back or Cancelling.**

Press to .....

- Access main menu
- Return from sub-menu
- Exit from a selected action without making a change

It is worth remembering that adjusting the previous days' ( or vehicles' if a second vehicle is used on the same day ) finish time or the current days' start time can only be carried out when the driver card is inserted on the current day ( or vehicle if a second vehicle is used on the same day ).

## 6.2 To Enter Activities Manually

Ensure that **yes** is displayed on the screen. If it isn't use 'up' or 'down' button and then press 'OK'

the display will then show the last time the driver card was removed and ask if this is the end of the shift.

Press the 'up' or 'down' buttons until **no** is displayed, then press 'OK'.

Two sets of date & time will appear, one above the other.

Use the 'up' button to alter the lower of the two times to the required time (if you go too far use the 'down' button to go back).

When the correct time is shown press 'OK'.

The display will then show an activity mode. Select the required activity by pressing the 'up' or 'down' buttons and then press 'OK'.

Finally, confirmation of the location at the end of the last duty is requested, use the 'up' and 'down' buttons as required and press 'OK' to confirm.

When the entering of manual times is complete, you will be prompted to confirm the start location for your new period of duty. Use the 'up' and 'down' buttons to select location and press 'OK' to confirm.

The vehicle unit will then process and store your changes and copy this data to your driver card.

When the vehicle unit has finished processing and copying a driver card symbol pictogram will appear in the display.

Now you can start to carry out your days' duties as normal.

If no manual entries are required select 'NO' and press 'OK'.

Select location and press 'OK'.

The card pictogram will appear when the data from the card has been read completely from the card.

Log on is complete.

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### 6.3 Log off Procedure

Press the driver card eject button.

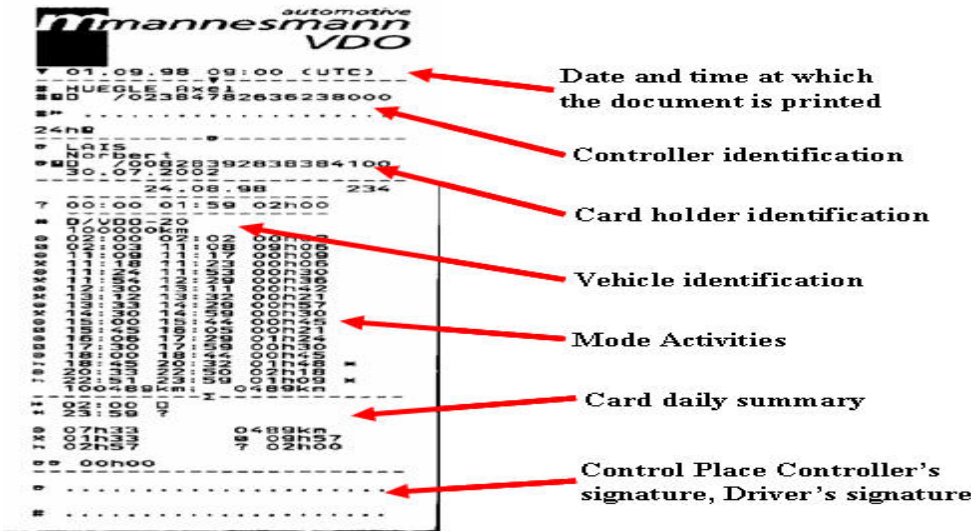
Select the location at the end of the shift and press 'OK'.

The system will then ask if a printout is required.

If a printout is required select YES and wait for it to be printed.

Otherwise select NO and press 'OK'. The driver card will then be released from the slot.

Log off is complete.





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## **Section 7 - Vehicle Maintenance**

A maintenance system is the entire process of looking after a vehicle. Proper maintenance aims to prevent serious defects with our fleet of vehicles and ensure that our vehicles are always in a safe and reliable condition.

The operator / driver of the vehicle are always responsible for the condition of the vehicle whether or not the vehicle is owned or hired.

You the driver are the closest contact with the vehicle and therefore the most likely to be aware first of any fault that may develop. The daily check routine provides a straightforward means of informing the Transport Manager or Nominated Transport Manager that some aspect of the vehicle may be faulty or in need of repair or replacement.

It is important to carry out daily checks before leaving the depot. Once the driver takes the vehicle out on the road they become responsible for it and can be prosecuted and convicted for driving a vehicle if found to be unsafe.

Drivers will be given time to complete these checks. They are not meant to be an in depth inspection but easily spotted faults, which should be picked up and rectified before the vehicle goes out.

Each vehicle will be issued with a Daily record / Vehicle check / Defect notification book. The driver will complete the daily check section before he takes control of the vehicle, and if a defect is found:

- It must be noted in the defect book.
- The Transport Manager should be notified immediately.

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- The defect should be rectified before the driver commences his journey or if a minor defect which does not compromise the vehicles roadworthiness arrangements to be made for the repair of the defect.

The check should consist of a walk around looking over the whole vehicle and should cover the external condition ensuring in particular that the lights, tyres, wheel fixings, bodywork and load are all secure and serviceable. Assistance may be required at some time during the inspection for example to see that lights are working at the rear of the vehicle.

On completion of the walk around check the Daily / Vehicle / Trailer Check / Defect Notification book should be completed and all tick boxes marked to verify the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition. If a defect is identified it must be noted on this form and handed to the Transport Manager or Nominated Transport representative for repair before the vehicle is taken onto the road.

If you drive more than one vehicle in any working period, then the safety routines must be carried out on each vehicle prior to use.

**As a fleet vehicle driver, you are responsible for ensuring that daily checks are completed and that faults and concerns are reported immediately. Failure on the part of drivers to comply with the above may give rise to an offence being unwittingly committed as well as possibly endangering themselves and/or others. Such a failure may also give rise to disciplinary action by the company.**

**It is also possible that despite the pre-start daily checks outlined above that your vehicle might develop a fault on route. You should be alert to any indication that the vehicle is**

**Developing faults, e.g. warning lights, exhaust emitting smoke, vibrations or other symptoms as you drive, and respond to any deterioration appropriately.**

### 7.1 Vehicle Breakdown

If your vehicle breaks down on the road try to park the vehicle in a safe position where it will cause the least disruption to other road users. If the vehicle is causing an obstruction make it as visible as possible (i.e. switch on hazard warning lights, side lights and rear fog lamps and a warning triangle. Contact your Transport Manager immediately.

If possible drivers should stay with the vehicle at the reported location until the breakdown vehicle arrives. If the vehicle becomes driveable (possibly an intermittent fault) then inform your Transport Manager to avoid unnecessary call out and subsequent charges.

### 7.2 Vehicle Fridge Breakdown

If you are carrying goods that include chilled food products and the refrigerator on your vehicle fails you should follow the procedure outlined below:

- If the temperature in your vehicle has risen above the set point and will not come down with vehicle doors shut you should assess the temperature. If it is below 7°C you should continue with your deliveries.
- If the temperature is 7°C or above, you should contact your Transport Manager for further advice.
- If your vehicle breaks down but the refrigeration unit continues to work you should leave this running, contact your Transport Manager for further instruction.

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### **Section 8 – Load Security**

Although not a daily check in the mechanical sense, being aware of the condition of the load is of fundamental importance to you the driver. Whilst walking around the vehicle the driver should check all produce is secure, the side curtains and rear doors are also secured and that the door locking mechanism or curtain straps are in working order.

### **Section 9 - Vehicle Loading**

Most load safety is applied common sense. It would be difficult to lay down hard and fast rules for what is the right method. You will be most familiar with loads in relation to your vehicle on any particular day. Should you suspect that your allocated vehicle is overloaded you must not commence a journey or operate the vehicle in any manner on the public highway, to help identify an overloaded vehicle look at the following,

- The vehicle appearing to sit low on the axle's i.e. minimum space compared to normal between the wheels / tyres and the wheel arches.
- Vehicle leans to one side.
- Sluggish vehicle acceleration.
- Excessively light or heavy steering.
- Excessively extended stopping distance when braking.

The load should be arranged in such a way as to keep the centre of gravity as low as possible, heavy items should be at the bottom with lighter at the top. The load should be spread along the length of the vehicle and not loaded to one end.

Vehicles should be loaded in such a way to allow for even unloading of the vehicle on route without the need for undue movement of the vehicles load by you the driver.

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Notwithstanding the above, in the case of multi drop work, a diminishing load as goods are removed from the rear of the vehicle may still result in uneven weight distribution, possibly overloading the front axle. In such cases you should even out the load by moving some items from the front to the middle of the vehicle.

As a rule loads should be placed up against the headboard to stop them moving forward or working loose during the journey.

Never assume that the weight of the load will keep it in place and never rely on curtains to keep the load on board, they are normally designed only to keep the weather out. Full pallets must be shrink wrapped and strapped to the vehicle floor to prevent the load from moving or toppling over and placed up against the headboard, cages should be strapped in place, never use straps that are damaged as this will reduce their strength and increase the risk of the cage or pallet from working loose.

In the case of vehicles loaded by drop there are no set rules except to keep heavy goods at the bottom and the load at even height throughout the loading area.

When loading your vehicle ask yourself the following –

- Can the load slide or topple forward, backwards or to the side?
- Is the load unstable?
- Is the load securing equipment in a poor condition?
- Is there anything loose that may fall from the pallet?
- An overloaded vehicle can be a danger to you, other motorists and pedestrians. The vehicle is designed to operate at a gross vehicle weight; anything over this will affect the handling characteristics and reduce braking performance.

There are two ways in which our vehicles may be overloaded, by axle weight or by gross vehicle weight. The Transport Manager and you the driver both have a responsibility to make sure that our vehicles operate safely and legally and that the maximum weights on the vehicles plating

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certificate (usually fixed in the cab) are not exceeded. Gross vehicle weights can easily be calculated but axle weights are more difficult. If our vehicles gross vehicle weight is 7,500kg and we know the unladen weight is 4,000kg then a load plus driver plus fuel of 3,500kg is just within its gross weight limit. Provided the load is evenly distributed throughout the length of the cargo area no offence of overloading should be committed. Achieving proper weight distribution is an important contributory factor in the safe handling of a goods vehicle and is all about how the weight of the vehicle and its load are distributed across the axles of the vehicle.

If a vehicle of ours is weighed at a roadside check and found to be overweight both the company and driver risk prosecution. A Gardaí can order a vehicle to be weighed at any time and can divert it up to twenty five km to a weigh bridge. They can prohibit an overweight vehicle from being driven any further until the excess weight has been removed or instruct a driver to go to a nearby site for off-loading.

Separate prosecutions may be brought for each axle that is overloaded as well as a gross overloading offence. If a vehicle is seriously overloaded it is possible for both driver and company to be charged with using a vehicle in a dangerous condition.

## **Section 10 - Vehicle Insurance & Accident Reporting**

Our vehicles are comprehensively insured. Drivers must report all accidents no matter how minor to their manager as soon as practicably possible. It is important we capture all of the relevant information needed at the scene of the accident.

To be involved in an accident does not necessarily mean being party to an actual collision. The driver of a vehicle becomes involved in an accident if the accident is caused by the presence of his/her vehicle, whether it is moving or stationary and whether or not he/she was in the vehicle at the time of the accident.

**On any involvement in an accident/incident whilst being in control of a company vehicle or a vehicle being used in connection with company business you should adopt the following procedures:**

In the event of a road traffic accident or incident you must **STOP** at the scene.

Check that everyone is okay and not injured. Depending on the type of accident or if you or the third party require assistance of the emergency services call 999. If the emergency services are not required then proceed to collate the relevant information as outlined below.

Ensure you complete all sections of the Motor Accident Report Form.

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- At this time note any passengers in the third party vehicle and details of any injuries.
- If possible take photographs of the third party damage, note any skid marks, road markings and road signs.
- Note any pre-accident damage to the third party vehicle.
- Do you suspect the third party to be under the control of alcohol or drugs? Do you suspect a fraudulent claim by the third party (Did the third party deliberately cause the accident) if yes call the police immediately.
- Providing you are not suspicious of foul play give your details to the third party.
  
- Ensure you report the accident / incident (from the scene) to the relevant person in your branch.
- **Do not continue with your deliveries until you have contacted your manager.**
- On return to the branch you must report to your manager and hand over your accident form and any other relevant paper work.
- 

To assist you in taking down of all of the necessary details after an accident always use the form provided by your Transport Manager.

**NEVER ADMIT LIABILITY** at the scene of the accident. This can make any insurance claim thereafter null and void. Do not sign any document or paper from the third party and do not make any payment or promise of payment

All drivers who are involved in an accident will be interviewed by the Line Manager to determine

- Cause of the accident.
- Contributing factors?
- Identify training needs.
- A need for disciplinary action to be taken.



## **Section 11 - Defensive Driving**

Defensive driving means safe driving. It is the art of driving to avoid preventable accidents and avoid contributing to others being involved in accidents.

A preventable accident is one that you as a professional driver can prevent by doing everything you reasonably can. This means always being alert to what other road users are doing and taking appropriate action to prevent an accident. This applies to the driving of any vehicle but is particularly important with Lorries, the drivers of which are often protected from the consequences of their own mistakes.

You must maintain constant concentration to observe any inappropriate behaviour or driving errors by other drivers. You must be ready to adjust your own driving in good time to prevent yourself being involved in any accident resulting from illegal acts or errors by other road users.

The most serious accidents are caused at least partly by vehicles being driven too fast and too close to the vehicle in front, but many minor accidents are due to the driver not being aware of the presence of another vehicle, or what it was doing at the time. Examples of this include a lorry running into the back of another vehicle at traffic lights or a roundabout, and a lorry colliding with a smaller vehicle when moving from a fast lane to a slow lane, or when turning left at a road junction.

Manoeuvring your vehicle is a difficult and skilled operation; you should always observe your surroundings before carrying out any manoeuvre and use your mirrors. There are blind spots around the sides of the vehicle which makes it more important to be aware of other road users both to either side and to the rear of the vehicle.

## **Section 12 - Driving in Extreme Weather Conditions**

Goods need to be delivered in a safe and timely manner all year round and in all weather conditions. You should always make sure that you, your vehicle and the goods you carry arrive safely at the intended destination. It is essential that you take notice of weather reports and warnings. Do not start a journey without being thoroughly prepared and having made safety checks and alterations to your vehicle to accommodate the weather.

All drivers need to remember that the vehicle they are driving will be affected in terms of external steps, locks and cargo hold floors depending on weather conditions. Remember if the conditions are wet and icy on the road then the steps leading to your cab or the rear of the vehicle will also be wet and icy. It is important to use the cab grab handles when entering or exiting your cab and always climb in the cab using both left and right handle. When exiting the cab climb out backwards using the same handles. Never use the steering wheel to pull yourself into the cab.

The floor of the rear cargo area should be dry but heavy rain, ice or snow may settle on the entrance to the box when the door is opened for loading / unloading purpose and for this reason it is important that you use the grab handles to steady yourself when entering or exiting the cargo area.

Locks may become hard to release due to ice build-up or hard to grip due to them being wet, protective gloves should be worn in such conditions.

Remember it will not just be the roads or your vehicle steps that are wet, icy or covered in snow. The ground you are stepping onto is also likely to be hazardous so care will need to be taken when stepping out of your vehicle and walking to and from the rear cargo area, ensure that you are wearing protective footwear with good tread to aid grip and also wear a reflective coat so you will be seen in poor visibility conditions

### **Section 13 - Manual Handling**

To reduce the likelihood of suffering pain and injury correct manual handling and good kinetic lifting techniques should be practised wherever possible.

- An ergonomic approach should be adopted and you should avoid the need to bend, twist, stretch or reach by organising loads so as to eliminate unnecessary movement / strain wherever possible. Items should be lifted to the rear of your vehicle so that you can step down without carrying the load. The load can then be collected from the rear of the vehicle without the need to bend.
- Avoid carrying loads long distances and use any equipment provided to you to reduce hazardous manual handling where appropriate.
- When pulling or pushing a cage, make sure your hands are positioned between your waste and shoulders.

If you encounter any specific manual handling operation that requires more detailed consideration, consult with your Transport Manager.

Tail Lifts can address some manual handling hazards very effectively but accidents can occur during operation. Most accidents are the result of slips or falls from the platform or loads falling from the platform. **Before operating the vehicle tail lift you must have had adequate information, instruction and training.** Do not put yourself and other people at risk by operating machinery when you have not been trained.

When access is required, this should only be made by appropriate means i.e. steps, ladders, grab handles and tail lifts. Rear and side underrun bars are not considered as appropriate means of access.

- Loads should be managed as to minimise the need to climb in and out of the cargo area.
- Under no circumstances should you be carrying produce when climbing in and out of the cargo area.
- Under no circumstances should you jump from the rear of the vehicle.
- Beware of environment you are working in – oncoming traffic, forklifts and pedestrians could be a potential hazard when exiting the cargo area.
- When unloading the vehicle, loads should be left towards the rear of the vehicle (making sure your exit is left clear) so that they can be suitably collected from ground level.
- When gaining access or egress from a vehicle, care should be taken at all times. Three points of contact should be maintained where ever possible, i.e. both feet and one hand or both hands and one foot.
- Ensure you keep the rear cargo area organised and tidy to minimise the risk of trips and falls. Ensure pallet wrap, straps, empty pallets and product spillage are removed and stored away from the working area.
- When using a pump truck to move pallets avoid pulling the pallet backwards, where possible always push in front of you.
- All vehicle floors should be routinely cleaned to avoid slippery surfaces.
- Rear cargo doors should be closed as much as possible to prevent water egress from the weather or in the case of refrigerated vehicles, the formation of moisture forming around the rear doors and floor.
- Approved safety boots are to be worn at all times whilst on duty. These should be in sound condition with sufficient tread.
- Door retainers should be used at all times whilst vehicle doors are open to prevent them causing injury/damage if they get caught in the wind.

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- Always be especially mindful of the risk of slipping/falling when operating from the back of vehicles. Ensure that you take every precaution as detailed to prevent slips, trips and falls.
- 

Working on a curtain sided vehicle can pose serious fall risks and other risks to your H&S. You should never operate on the rear of the vehicle with the curtains opened except in cases where a suitable and sufficient documented risk assessment has been undertaken and suitable controls are in place. The loading of your vehicle should be planned to minimise the need to access the cargo area, where this is not possible –

- Follow any safe working practice relating to your vehicle and task at all times.
- Be mindful at all times of your proximity to any edge, work away from the exposed edge.
- Use any safety equipment supplied.
- Never walk backwards on the cargo bed (pulling a pump truck), maintain vision in the direction of travel.
- Always keep the working area completely clear of empty pallets, straps and pallet wrap.

If you have any issues in relation to operating on the back of your vehicle please see your line manager.

## **Section 14 - Mobile phone use by drivers.**

New legislation on mobile phone use while driving.

The law on mobile phones in vehicles just got a little bit tougher. It is not a dramatic change, and it may not be the last one needed, but it does close off a loophole and it does make the offence of sending a text while driving more serious. For clarity, the situation is as follows:

You may never hold a mobile phone in one hand and the steering wheel in the other. No exceptions, no excuses – this is never legal. This has not changed with the new regulations.

You have always been allowed to use a hands-free phone if it is properly mounted in its cradle. However you may never send a text or an email from a phone nor may you look up the internet even if the phone is in a hands-free cradle.

If you break that law you will have to go to court where you could be fined up to €1,000 for a first offence and €2,000 for a second offence. You may also (theoretically) receive up to 3 months in jail.

It is permissible to answer a call on a hands-free phone. Some people seem to think that the new law makes it an offence even to press the 'receive' button but this is not true. It is still not specifically illegal to answer the phone. Even so it is a bad habit and one that people should avoid.

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You may not dial a number on hands-free while driving unless the system is voice-operated. Again the advice is that you should not make calls or engage in lengthy conversations on the phone while driving.

There is no exemption or special treatment, the emergency services are different and are exempt from certain aspects of road traffic law in certain circumstances.

Just because the law doesn't forbid something explicitly does not mean that you are free to do it. There is a clause which makes it an offence to drive a vehicle 'without reasonable consideration'. This covers razors, make-up, fumbling for cigarettes, carelessly using a coffee cup and thousands of other things besides. So a hands-free user could still be prosecuted if their actions mean that they are not concentrating on their driving.

**Information Note: Road Traffic Act 2006 (Restrictions on use of mobile phones) Regulations 2014.**

Drivers of commercial vehicles will not use mobile phones, hand helds, **while they are driving; this includes voice calls, texting, Email or the use of any other function or** application capability that the mobile phone may have. If fitted, a hands free facility may be used to provide a convenient way of using the mobile phone.

**Section 15 - Vehicle Cab Access and Egress**

This should be treated no differently from when working on the rear of the vehicle, grab handles will be supplied as per the vehicle manufacturer's specification and should be used at all times.

- Ensure the cab steps and grab handles are free from damage, secure and clean.
- Always enter the cab using the grab handles never the steering wheel.
- Always exit the cab backwards never jump from the cab depending on the type of vehicle.
- When gaining access or egress from a vehicle, care should be taken at all times. Three points of contact should be maintained, i.e. both feet and one hand or both hands and one foot.



## **Section 16 - Personnel**

If a uniform is supplied it must be kept clean and worn whilst on company business, local arrangements will apply to the type and style of uniform issued, Drivers should not make any changes to the appearance of the uniform.

Drivers portray the company image and must always be well groomed and smart in appearance.

All personal accidents however serious or trivial must be reported to the management as soon as is reasonably practicable. Details should be recorded whether or not it occurred on the road, on customer's premises or at the branch.

**Accidents recorded by a third party should also be reported to your line manager as above.**

To ensure high standards are maintained the company will pursue regular training based on the needs of the individual driver. Training will come in the form of verbal instruction, classroom training or on the road in cab training.

## **Section 17 - Customer Service**

Many customers base their opinions of our company on the three elements they see and meet most often; product, vehicle and **you the driver**. For this reason it is important you are courteous and considerate towards the customer at all times.

The following general points apply:

- **Considerate vehicle parking.**
- **Leave your worries in the vehicle cab.**
- **Smart in appearance.**
- **Introduce yourself to the person receiving the goods you are delivering.**
- **Smile, be polite and helpful.**
- **Ask the customer where they want you to put the delivery.**
- **Handle goods carefully.**
- **Stack for easy checking.**
- **Make a note of any requests, queries or discrepancies on the delivery note.**
- **Try to resolve queries, be sympathetic and offer to contact the branch or give the contact details of the person at the branch that can help solve the issue.**
- **Obtain a valid legible signature for the goods delivered from the customer. If collecting cash / cheque sign the invoice for the amount received and deposit in the vehicle safe (if fitted).**
- **Thank the customer when you leave, interacting with the customer promotes a good working relationship which could help build business with that customer.**

## **NOTES & USEFUL CONTACTS**

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TELEPHONE / EMAIL:

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TELEPHONE / EMAIL:

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DRIVERS

NAME.....

BRANCH.....

**I have read and I understand the contents of the Company Fleet Driver’s Handbook. By signing below I acknowledge receipt of my personal copy and I agree to abide with the conditions and procedures set out within it. I have been made aware that if I have any questions in relation to the content of the handbook I am obliged to seek further guidance and explanation from my Transport Manager or nominated transport representative.**

DATE.....

SIGNATURE.....