

Maintenance and repair of commercial vehicles

January 2016

This Alert provides guidance about the risks associated with failing to maintain and repair components in a commercial vehicle (vehicle used for carrying goods or fare-paying passengers). It also highlights the importance of conducting regular inspections, maintenance and servicing of commercial vehicles.

Background

An employee who was a passenger in a commercial heavy vehicle sustained fatal injuries as a result of a road accident.

Following the incident, an examination of the vehicle identified that the driver seat was in an unsafe condition as it was not adequately secured. This was due to missing parts and cracks in the metalwork of the seat pan (including welds in the steel frame).

Although the employer was aware of the condition of the driver seat, it had not been repaired and was in an unsafe condition at the time of the accident.

This incident highlights how the lack of, or inadequacy of, work procedures to repair reported faults creates a risk to employees and others.

Recommended risk control measures

Employers should ensure:

- commercial vehicles
 - are roadworthy, safe and without risks to health
 - are regularly inspected and appropriately maintained (this should include monitoring any repair work undertaken)
 - with faults are not used until they are repaired
- components are repaired appropriately (in accordance with manufacturer recommendations or by a competent person), and
- employees are provided with instruction and training in relation to undertaking pre-operational checks before using commercial vehicles.

Self-employed persons, who operate commercial vehicles, should also adopt the above risk control measures.

Further Information

An example of a commercial vehicle pre-use inspection checklist ('Daily commercial vehicle inspection checklist') is available from vta.com.au

Contact Details

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For more information on occupational health and safety, go to WorkSafe's website: worksafe.vic.gov.au

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