

# PRE-START INSPECTION

## FACT SHEET

As with any other work equipment, vehicles wear out and are exposed to environmental factors daily. **One of the most efficient methods to identify small problems before turning into major incidents, is through pre-start inspections.** They also support, safe journeys, low maintenance costs, and operational benefits <sup>[1]</sup>. **Pre-start checks set you up for success on the road.**

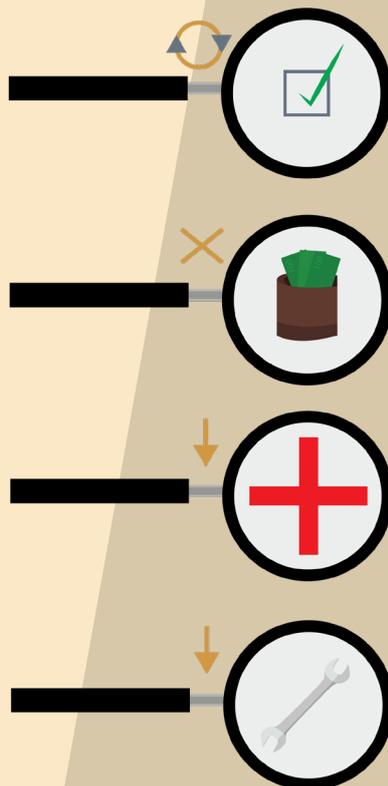
### THE ISSUE

Due to constant repetition, pre-start checks may seem non-necessary and even irrelevant, based on a false sense of safety. Thinking 'because it was OK yesterday and the day before, it will be today too', is not true.

Some organisations may not consider pre-start inspections as part of the journey, or that it is a contractor role. However, outsourcing a task does not eliminate the responsibility of ensuring a safe working environment.

Pre-start checks are one of the best strategies to avoid serious road incidents and major disruptions during the journey <sup>[2]</sup> <sup>[3]</sup>.

Besides safety benefits, pre-start inspections have financial and operational benefits <sup>[1]</sup>. Identifying issues while they are still minor, prevents higher repairment costs in the future and scheduled journey disruptions.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## DRIVERS



**Protocols are there for a reason.** Completing the check every single day helps you stay safe on the road. Resist the urge to rush, and tick and flick.



**Get familiar with the type of vehicle you are driving** and get to know its most common faults. This will help you identify unusual or risky situations <sup>[2]</sup>.



**Prepare a standard set of questions that you can always ask yourself** before starting a new journey <sup>[9]</sup>.



**Pre-start checks should also include hygiene management** to minimise the risk of contracting COVID-19. Make sure you have in the vehicle the necessary elements to keep your working space safe <sup>[10]</sup>.



**Spending time completing the pre-start check is setting yourself for success.** In addition to keeping yourself safe, you are lowering the probability of a major setback on the road.



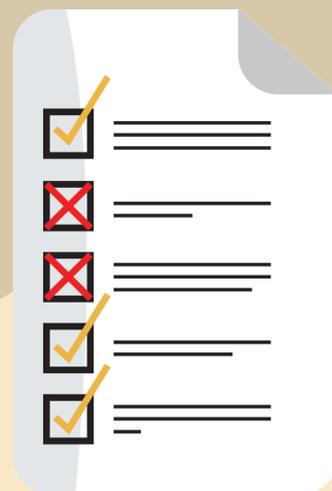
**Once you arrive at your destination, do a quick post-trip inspection** to check the vehicle for any possible damage <sup>[11]</sup>.



**Remember to check the load restraint system as part of the pre-start inspection.** It keeps you and the road users around you safe.



**Follow a proper guideline or checklist to make sure you do not miss anything** <sup>[4] [5] [6] [7] [8]</sup>. Heavy vehicle types are diverse and so are their uses, an organisation must ensure that their documented pre-start process covers all appropriate external, mechanical, internal, payload, restraint, and driver wellbeing checks to ensure a safe journey.



## MANAGERS



**Have in place a Safety Management System** <sup>[12]</sup>. It can help you identify the areas your staff may be facing higher risks and how to reduce it.



**Promote workplace safety culture** by explaining the importance of pre-start vehicle inspections. The time invested in them is one of the most important parts of the job.



**Create a thorough training and refresh periodically.** Make it clear and make it well known.



**Besides national regulations, some states may require additional inspection criteria.** Find out about the specific requirements for your location and stay informed of changes and updates <sup>[14]</sup>.



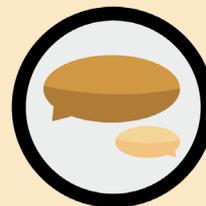
**Share case studies and experiences from colleagues** (peer-to-peer examples) about how pre-start inspections helped identified minor issues before turning into high-risk situations.



**Remind drivers the checklist is there for a reason** – for your safety and others'. Not following them has consequences, personal and professional, affecting families and communities.



**Perform random audits.** Check how forms are used by drivers to help them avoid complacency and treating it as a rapid tick and flick exercise.



**Driver's feedback can help you improve pre-start checklists and forms.** Actively ask for their comments on how to improve the process.



**Teach by leading.** Have supervisory staff to do the check with drivers sporadically.



**Take advantage of technology.** Platforms, live documents, or mobile phone applications offer advantages, such as facilitating documentation, immediate notifications, and the option of including pictures <sup>[13]</sup>. Look for a digital option that fits your organisation's needs, there are many available options.

**Make sure your vehicles and practices comply with the [Heavy Vehicle National Law](#) and the regulations that apply for each state or territory you operate in and drive through. Please reference Chapter 1A – Safety duties.**

**Additionally, please check the [Master Industry Code of Practice Chapter 8 Vehicle Standards – Risk Types and Suggested Controls](#).**