

Safety Inspections of Industrial Lift Trucks: BITA Guidance Note 28

◆OC 234/13

Target Audience:

All HSE Inspectors

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SUMMARY

This OC, based on Technology Division Minute TD/2/INF/1/2000, advises inspectors of the British Industrial Truck Association (BITA) guidance on safety inspection of industrial lift trucks. The text of the guidance, reproduced at the appendix, is for **HSE use only and must not be made available to the public.**

INTRODUCTION

1 The British Industrial Truck Association (BITA) has formulated guidance on safety inspection of industrial lift trucks. The text of the guidance document, BITA Guidance Note (GN28), is reproduced at the appendix.

2 **The appendix is for internal use only and must not be made available to the public. Agreement has been reached with BITA that it can be copied for use ONLY within HSE.** Copies for use by persons outside HSE can be purchased from:

The British Industrial Truck Association
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3 Guidance Note 28 provides guidance on how competent persons can demonstrate their competence to carry out safety inspection, the required frequency of safety inspections and what should be included in the safety inspection. It includes an example of a report of safety inspection.

STATUS OF BITA GN28

4 Guidance Note 28 is industry guidance formulated by a BITA working group with input from HSE, the Fork Truck Association (FTA) and the Safety Assessment Federation (SAFed). It is not endorsed or approved by HSE but provides guidance on good practice in thorough examination which can be used to inform inspectors' opinions.

5 Guidance Note 28 does not cover inspection and examination carried out at the point of supply or following significant modification of lift trucks in order to meet the requirements of the Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 1992.

SAFETY INSPECTION

6 'Safety inspection' as defined in GN28 combines thorough examination (as required by the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) reg.9) and inspection (as required by the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) reg.6). The intention is to cover all safety critical aspects of the truck in one 'safety inspection'. This approach deals pragmatically with some of the difficulties and

differences of opinion which have arisen in interpreting the requirements of PUWER and LOLER in relation to fork-lift trucks. For instance, many competent persons inspect safety critical parts of lift trucks other than the lifting chains, forks and mast during thorough examinations. There are arguments that if LOLER reg.9 was used alone then only the parts of the truck that are involved in lifting a load would be covered, and other safety critical parts of the truck, eg the parking brake and any seat switch, would be omitted in a thorough examination.

7 Guidance on the parts of the truck covered by the safety inspection are included on the back of the report of safety inspection. This is additional to the requirements of LOLER Schedule 1. It is of value because it identifies the scope of the safety inspection by specifying the parts of the lift truck which are covered.

8 No distinction has been made in GN28 between the parts of the lift truck covered by LOLER reg.9 and those covered by PUWER reg.6. This has been done purposefully because it is arguable whether or not a parking brake and some other parts are covered by LOLER. Consequently, similar reporting requirements are given for all parts of the truck covered by the safety inspection.

REPORT OF THOROUGH EXAMINATION (LOLER REG.9)

9 The example report of safety inspection given in GN28 includes all of the information which needs to be contained in a report of a thorough examination as given in LOLER (Schedule 1).

INSPECTION REPORT (PUWER REG.6)

10 On the back of the example report of safety inspection given in GN28, a checklist is provided with space for recommended actions and associated timescales. The checklist is provided to allow for recording of the condition of truck parts and recommendations on the actions to be taken. It is supplementary to the other side of the report which provides all the necessary information required by LOLER reg.9.

11 The checklist provides information which previously has not been included in reports of thorough examination on lift trucks. It allows the results of PUWER reg.6 inspections to be recorded along with information which normally would not be recorded under the LOLER reg.9 thorough examination, eg defects which are unlikely to become a danger to people. The checklist is **not** a maintenance checklist because the nature of the checks required for safety inspection, as detailed in GN28 clause 5, are different from those needed for maintenance purposes. Consequently, it should not be used as a maintenance checklist but it can be used to indicate when maintenance procedures need to be put in place, eg maintenance inspections, repairs or replacement of parts.

FREQUENCY OF SAFETY INSPECTIONS

12 Guidance on the frequency of safety inspections is given in GN28 clause 3. Clause 3 recommends different safety inspection frequencies for lift trucks used in different conditions. It recommends a thorough examination frequency of:

- (1) 12 months for lift trucks handling materials only for up to 40 hours per week, which is consistent with LOLER reg.9(3)(a)(ii);
- (2) 6 months for lift trucks handling materials only for between 40 hours and 80 hours per week, eg as part of a scheme of examination complying with LOLER reg.9(3)(a)(iii);
- (3) 6 months for lift trucks used to lift people;
- (4) 6 months for lift trucks permanently fitted with attachments (other than a side shift);
- (5) 4 months for lift trucks, with or without permanently fitted attachments, operating more than 80 hours per week, eg as part of a scheme of examination; and
- (6) 4 months or less if the lift truck is operating in an arduous environment, for example as part of a scheme of examination.

13 LOLER reg.9(3) requires all lifting equipment to be thoroughly examined either in accordance with the timescales given in reg.9(3)(a)(i) and (ii) or in accordance with intervals specified in an examination scheme. Of necessity, this will need to be a written examination scheme specifying the various examination timescales.

14 The above timescales are BITA's guidance on what BITA believe to be good common practice under different circumstances. Some of these timescales are consistent with the timescales stipulated in reg.9(3)(a)(i) and (ii) and in this case, employers would not need a written examination scheme. However, employers will need to have a written examination scheme for those timescales that are not consistent with reg.9(3)(a)(i) and (ii).

'COMPETENT PERSON'

15 Guidance Note 28 section 2.1 refers to BS EN 45004: 1995 *General criteria for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection*, and states that 'competent persons carrying out safety inspections should meet the requirements of BS EN 45004: 1995...'. HSE inspectors cannot insist on the requirements of BS EN 45004: 1995 being met because GN28 section 2.1 goes beyond that which can be enforced. However, BS EN 45004 is widely, but not universally, used to accredit competent persons. In this context BS EN 45004, which outlines criteria for, amongst other things, the independence, impartiality and training of competent persons, should be viewed as **guidance** on established good practice rather than mandatory criteria. Competent persons may comply with legal requirements under PUWER and LOLER without necessarily meeting all the requirements of BS EN 45004: 1995. For relevant guidance on competent persons see:

- (1) L22 *Safe use of work equipment: Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 Approved Code of Practice and guidance* paras 148-152, and OC 200/27 paras 31 and 85; and
- (2) L113 *Safe use of lifting equipment: Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 Approved Code of Practice and guidance*, paras 294 and 295, and OC 234/11 para 17.

ADVICE FOR INSPECTORS

16 Guidance Note 28 represents the BITA's views on good practice in the safety inspection of lift trucks which includes thorough examination under LOLER reg.9 and inspection under PUWER reg.6. It provides guidance which inspectors may find useful for assessing the suitability and roles of competent persons and the content of associated thorough examination and inspection schemes.

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APPENDIX IS CLOSED

APPENDIX
(summary and paras 1-2)

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¹ Exemption 14 – Information given where the supplier was not under a legal obligation (actual or implied) to supply it