

Lorry Loader Hire



Even trained operators should receive familiarisation training on hand over.

The object of the following guidance is to clarify the obligations and duties of both parties in a hire/lease contract. This guidance deals with the loader crane only and further information should be sought for the vehicle. Before entering into any hire agreement, it is important to read and fully understand the contract details.

Vehicle

Hire terms and conditions relating to the vehicle may be of general industry type and may not cover the use of the loader crane. It is important to be aware of this.

Loader Crane

The loader crane must be in good working order and have a valid certificate of Test and Thorough Examination (this may be a copy). The required maintenance schedule to be adhered to must be provided and you should ensure that every lorry loader is checked and serviced before each new hire. An operator's manual must also be provided with the loader crane and must be read and understood by the operator.



It is important that both parties must have a full working knowledge of the crane being hired. For the user this will allow them to utilise the crane to its full potential and ensure it is suitable for the job to be performed. In the case of the crane hirer, this will allow it to sell its service more effectively, and take full advantage of any technology which might be installed on the crane.

For example, data acquisition (data monitoring) systems are available, which store information about the lifting duties that the crane has been subjected to. This information can be invaluable for hire companies, as they can examine the usage to which the crane has been put by any customer, including any overloading. These systems also enable the remaining life of the crane to be calculated more accurately and so obviously provide additional safety.

Operator

Under the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) and 'The Health and Safety at Work Act', operators have a legal duty to operate

loader cranes safely. In order for the operator to be fully conversant with the operation of the lorry loader, he/she must have not only undergone the appropriate basic training, but also received familiarisation training at the point of handover. It is important that the operator is familiar with the controls and safety systems that are specific to that particular lorry loader. Experience of operating one make/model of crane does not imply an operator will be conversant with others, as loader crane manufacturers are constantly improving their designs.

In fact, lack of product familiarisation is one of the biggest problems facing lorry loader hirers. Anthony Fensom, workshop manager for Leeds Commercial Vehicle Hire says "one of our biggest problems is operators not understanding the systems which are specific to the crane that has been hired. Although we offer familiarisation training, all too often we are told that this won't be required. Unfortunately this can result in damage to the equipment or customers not getting the most out of the crane."

Insurance

It is important to ensure that adequate insurance is held to cover the crane as well as the vehicle, the agreement with the hire company, the operator of the equipment and for third party liability.

Maintenance

Ask for details of the maintenance arrangements for the lorry loader, especially for longer-term hires. The Certificate of Thorough Examination will show when the next examination is due. If this falls within the hire period, confirm what the arrangements are for having the examination carried out and what the procedure is for dealing with any corrective action resulting from it. Also, establish the requirements of the daily and weekly maintenance tasks and ensure that these are carried out as per the manufacturer's instructions.

Inspections

Any damage or fault found with the equipment should be immediately reported back to the hire company. If requested, take the equipment out of service until the damage or fault has been repaired and tested. It is also important to ask for details of the required daily pre-use checks and weekly inspections. The loader crane operator can make these checks and inspections provided they have received the correct training and are qualified as competent.

Breakdown

What happens in the event of a breakdown? Most rental vehicles are covered by roadside assistance. Check that the loader crane is included in this cover, which provider is used by the hire company and that you have its telephone number.

Collection/Return of Lorry Loader

Inspect the vehicle and crane carefully on collection. Look for any signs of damage. Make sure that any damage is noted in full on the rental agreement before you sign it. If any damage to the loader crane affects its operation and safe use, then it should be refused. Allow plenty of time, particularly at busy rental sites, to check the vehicle in on return. Make sure that it is inspected by the hire company and that you both agree.

Note and sign for any damage on all copies of the rental agreement.

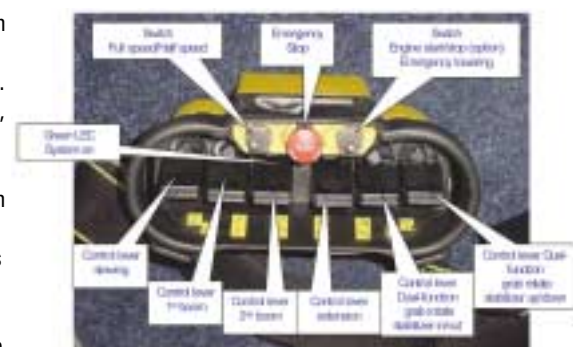
Planning of the lifting operations

All lifting operations should be planned to ensure that they are carried out safely and that all foreseeable risks have been taken into account. Irrespective of the type of contract and/or terms and conditions of hire, it must be agreed who is responsible for the planning and risk assessment of lifting operations.

Freight Transport Association (FTA) offers ALLMI Training



The Freight Transport Association (FTA) has put four of its instructors through an ALLMI Instructor course. Tony Mann, Thomas Manning, Susan Squires and Kevin Hardwick are now accredited to offer ALLMI operator training to the FTA's membership. FTA Training Manager, Chris MacRae said "Our Instructors are all very experienced in the field of lorry loaders, but still found the course to be challenging and informative. We are now looking forward to providing ALLMI training to our members."



Clear instructions on remote controls can be helpful.