STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Pre-Trip Vehicle Inspection SOP

Document no.	SOP-LOG-001
Revision	1.0
Owner	Fleet Safety Manager
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To confirm a vehicle is safe to operate before it leaves the yard, catching mechanical defects early and creating a documented inspection record for every trip.

2. Scope

Applies to the driver's pre-trip inspection of company trucks, vans and trailers before departure. Post-trip inspection and scheduled preventive maintenance are covered by separate procedures.

Definitions

DVIR	Driver Vehicle Inspection Report, the documented record of a pre-trip or post-trip inspection, including any defects found.
Out-of-service defect	A mechanical or safety issue serious enough that the vehicle must not be driven until it is repaired.
Walkaround	The physical inspection a driver performs by walking around and under the vehicle checking tires, lights, and visible components.
ICC bar	The rear underride guard on a trailer, checked for damage since it can affect docking and rear-impact protection.

3. Responsibilities

Driver	Performs the pre-trip inspection, completes the DVIR, and reports defects before departure.
Fleet Safety Manager	Reviews DVIRs, enforces the out-of-service process, and audits inspection quality.
Maintenance Technician	Diagnoses and repairs reported defects and signs off the vehicle as roadworthy.
Dispatcher	Reassigns loads or vehicles when a unit is placed out of service before departure.

RACI matrix

Activity	Driver	Fleet Safety Manager	Maintenance Technician	Dispatcher
Perform pre-trip inspection	R/A	A	I	-
Complete and submit DVIR	R	A	I	I
Repair reported defect	I	A	R	I

Activity	Driver	Fleet Safety Manager	Maintenance Technician	Dispatcher
Approve vehicle back in service	I	R/A	R	I
Reassign load for out-of-service unit	I	C	I	R/A

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Pre-trip inspection checklist matching vehicle type
- DVIR form or fleet management app
- Tire tread depth gauge
- Flashlight
- Out-of-service tag
- Reflective warning triangles

Personal protective equipment

- High-visibility vest
- Gloves
- Safety shoes

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Review the previous DVIR** Check the most recent post-trip DVIR for the vehicle for any defects reported and confirm they were repaired and signed off before starting your own inspection.	Driver	☐
5.2	**Check fluid levels and engine compartment** With the engine off, check oil, coolant, power steering and washer fluid levels, and look for visible leaks, worn belts or damaged hoses in the engine compartment.	Driver	☐
5.3	**Inspect tires and wheels** Check tire tread depth, look for cuts, bulges or uneven wear, confirm tire pressure is within range, and verify all lug nuts are present and tight. **Checkpoint:** Every tire meets minimum tread depth and shows no visible damage before the vehicle leaves the yard.	Driver	☐
5.4	**Check lights and reflectors** Turn on headlights, turn signals, brake lights, hazard lights and marker lights, and walk around the vehicle to confirm each one works and reflectors are clean and intact.	Driver	☐
5.5	**Inspect brakes and air system** For air brake vehicles, check air pressure builds correctly and the low air warning activates as expected; for hydraulic brakes, check the pedal for firmness and full travel. **Warning:** Never operate a vehicle with an air system that fails to build pressure or a warning light that does not clear before driving.	Driver	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.6	**Check coupling and trailer connections** For a combination vehicle, verify the fifth wheel is locked, the kingpin is properly seated, and air and electrical lines are connected and not chafing.	Driver	☐
5.7	**Inspect the trailer body and doors** Check the trailer floor, walls, roof and ICC bar for damage, confirm doors latch and seal properly, and check that the load is not visible through any gap.	Driver	☐
5.8	**Check mirrors, wipers and glass** Adjust mirrors for visibility, check wiper blades for wear, and inspect the windshield for cracks or chips that could obstruct the driver's view.	Driver	☐
5.9	**Verify required equipment on board** Confirm the vehicle carries required items such as a fire extinguisher, reflective warning triangles, and a spare fuse kit, and that they are within any marked service dates.	Driver	☐
5.10	**Complete the DVIR** Record the inspection result on the DVIR or fleet app, noting any defect found, its severity, and whether it affects the vehicle's roadworthiness. **Checkpoint:** A DVIR is completed and submitted for every vehicle before it leaves the yard, defect or not.	Driver	☐
5.11	**Tag and report an out-of-service defect** If a defect makes the vehicle unsafe to drive, attach an out-of-service tag, do not operate the vehicle, and notify the dispatcher and fleet safety manager immediately.	Driver	☐
5.12	**Confirm repair and clear for departure** Once maintenance repairs a reported defect, confirm the sign-off on the DVIR before removing the out-of-service tag and departing.	Maintenance Technician	☐

6. Quality checks

- A completed DVIR exists for every vehicle departure, with or without a defect.
- Every out-of-service defect has a documented repair sign-off before the tag is removed.
- Tire tread and brake checks are recorded, not just marked as passed.
- Fleet safety manager reviews a sample of DVIRs weekly for completeness.

7. Records

- Completed DVIR forms
- Out-of-service tags and repair sign-offs
- Maintenance repair log
- Fleet safety audit notes

8. KPIs

- Percentage of departures with a completed DVIR
- Number of out-of-service defects found per month
- Average time from defect reported to repair completed
- Roadside inspection violation rate

9. Common mistakes

- Rushing the walkaround and skipping under-vehicle or trailer checks.
- Departing with a known defect because the vehicle 'usually runs fine'.
- Not documenting a defect that was fixed verbally without an updated DVIR.
- Reusing a prior day's DVIR instead of completing a new inspection.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Ilia Pirozhenko

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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