

FORKLIFT SAFETY PROCEDURE

SCOPE

This procedure relates to all forklift truck activities under the management and control of Monash University in Australia and applies to affected staff, students, contractors and visitors.

PROCEDURE STATEMENT

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a framework in the identification, assessment and control of specific risks associated with forklift truck activities in buildings, car parks, service roads and Victorian gazetted roads at Monash University.

This procedure ensures that activities are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) and the Road Safety Act 1986 (Vic). This procedure complements and must be used in conjunction with the University's risk management process.

1. Abbreviations

FLT	Forklift Truck
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
OH&S	Monash Occupational Health and Safety
SWI	Safe Work Instruction

2. Safe operation of forklifts - General

Forklift trucks are an essential part of many activities at Monash University and if improper processes are carried out when in operation, they pose risks to both drivers and pedestrians.

Staff who elect to manage the risks associated with forklift activities in a different manner to that described in this procedure must use practices that provide at least an equivalent, or better, level of safety. However there are a number of mandatory legislative requirements associated with forklift operations that must be adhered to.

2.1 Environment

2.1.1 The hazards within the environment in which the forklift is to be used must be identified and the risks managed appropriately. Hazards to consider include:

- Areas of restricted space and ventilation
- Areas with contaminated atmospheres
- Lighting
- Flooring
- Inclines

2.2 Seatbelts and entry

2.2.1 All FLT's operated at Monash University must be fitted with a seatbelt restraint device. The seat belt, must be worn while operating the FLT.

2.2.2 Three points of contact must be maintained when entering and exiting FLT's.

2.3 Personal protective equipment

2.3.1 Steel capped shoes and fluorescent vest where appropriate must be worn when operating a FLT.

2.4 Passengers

2.4.1 Most forklifts are one person vehicles, and unless an additional seat, footrest and seatbelt is available, passengers must not ride on the forklift;

2.4.2 Riding on the tines of a FLT is strictly prohibited.

3. Forklift truck requirements

3.1 General

3.1.1 All FLT's must be fitted with safety devices including warning lights, horn, mirrors, seatbelt restraint systems and reversing beepers.

3.1.2 All FLT's must be placarded with safe working load capacity.

3.1.3 A FLT that is appropriate and adequate for the task to be performed, as determined by specific task assessment, must be used.

3.2 Forklift truck attachments

When an attachment is fitted to a FLT the dynamic and operating characteristics may change, making it necessary to identify the FLT capacity for that attachment and restrict some operating controls, if necessary. All operators must be trained in the use of that attachment and understand its characteristics prior to use.

3.2.1 Jibs/extensions/side shift devices/drum holders

- Attachments such as side shift devices, jibs and extension forks must have rated capacities and information on the type of FLT that is suitable for use in connection with such attachments;
- The revised capacity when an attachment is used is to be endorsed on the load plate of the FLT.

3.2.2 Platforms

- FLT's and work platforms must conform to AS2359.1.12.3.1 & 2;
- The FLT must be counterbalanced and have a minimum actual capacity of 1800kg at 600mm load center at maximum lift height or a capacity of 5 times the combined mass of the platform and rated load;
- The platform must be securely attached to the FLT;
- The platform may be used to raise people performing minor, special, tasks of short duration, where it is not practicable to use a scaffold or equipment specifically designed to elevate people;
- Platforms should only be used by persons who have been deemed competent in their use;
- These platforms should only be attached to a forklift with a nameplate that includes the serial or model number of the platform;
- Before anyone is raised on a forklift, Safe Work Instructions (SWIs) must be in place. These should include:
 - means to ensure a person can be rescued if an incident or breakdown occurs
 - means to ensure access to the work area by passing traffic and/or pedestrians is restricted

3.3 Maintenance

FLT must only be maintained by duly trained authorised persons.

3.3.1 Each FLT must be routinely maintained, in accordance with the manufacturers' recommendations

3.3.2 The maintenance log for each FLT must be recorded.

3.4 Operational condition checks

These are required to be undertaken on a daily basis prior to the first operation of the day. The pre-start checklist is to be utilised to assist with this task and to record the findings.

- 3.4.1 The pre-start checklist must be completed and signed-off by the first person using the vehicle that day.
- 3.4.2 Any issues must be recorded on the pre-start checklist. The specific issue must be recorded on the reverse of the pre-work checklist and brought to the attention of a manager/supervisor.
- 3.4.3 It is the manager's/supervisor's responsibility to ensure that issues noted during the pre-work check are scheduled for repair and that serious issues are repaired before the truck is used.
- 3.4.4 Pre-start inspection worksheets must be retained and kept for a period of one year.

3.5 Isolation of faulty forklift trucks

If the FLT is deemed unfit for purpose then it must be tagged out until the issue is rectified. Isolation must be performed in accordance with the [Isolation of Plant Procedure](#).

4. Transporting loads

FLT's have the potential to cause serious injuries. There is an increased risk to both the operator and pedestrians when carrying a load that restricts forward visibility. A spotter must be used at all times when operating the FLT to provide direction.

4.1 Load capacity

- 4.1.1 Load capacity ratings must be determined and visible to the operator (typically on the nameplate).
- 4.1.2 Operators must ensure that all processes are conducted within capacity.

4.2 Moving loads

- 4.2.1 During FLT movements between locations, the tines must be lowered as low as practicable to the ground.
- 4.2.2 The mast of the FLT must be tilted rearward during FLT movements, when practicable to do so.

4.3 Unbalanced loads

- 4.3.1 Risk management requirements for FLT operation must be reviewed with regard to the specifics of the job together with any additional risks that may be present and documented in [SARAH](#).
- 4.3.2 Consideration must be given to the appropriateness of the FLT for the task to be performed. An alternative must be sought if it is deemed inappropriate.
- 4.3.3 Controls such as tie down straps and stabiliser ropes should be considered.
- 4.3.4 The risk management of the transportation of unbalanced loads must be included in the SWI.

5. Traffic Management

5.1 Forklift truck traffic management plans

5.1.1 A traffic management plan is essential to address the risk associated with FLT use in the University environment. The traffic management plan must ensure complete physical separation of FLT's from pedestrians within the work area, as far as is reasonably practicable. If FLT's and people cannot be physically separated then the traffic management plan may use a range of controls including:

- FLT/pedestrian exclusion zones;
- Safety zones for truck drivers;
- Safety barriers, floor markings, mirrors;
- Signage;
- Speed limiting devices.
- Spotter

5.2 Travel on gazetted roads

- Any FLT travelling on a gazetted road must be registered to do so.

6. Responsibility for Implementation

6.1 A comprehensive list of OHS responsibilities is provided in the document [OHS Roles, Committees and Responsibilities Procedure](#). A summary of responsibilities with respect to FLT activities is provided below.

6.1.1 **Head of Academic/Administrative Unit:** It is the responsibility of the head of the unit to ensure that satisfactory provisions for health and safety are made for FLT activities organised by their Unit. The head of the academic/administrative unit is responsible for ensuring that all FLT activities associated with their unit are conducted in accordance with this procedure.

6.1.2 **Staff Member in Charge (Organiser):** The staff member in charge must ensure that the risks associated with FLT activities are controlled so far as is reasonably practicable. Consideration must be given to:

- Identifying hazards that may be encountered during the activity;
- Assessing the risks associated with those hazards;
- Implementing controls to minimise the risks to health and safety;
- Consulting with all employees that may be directly affected by the forklift activity;
- Ensuring that the responsibilities for health and safety are communicated to all relevant persons.

6.1.3 **Supervisors/Managers:** Supervisors of FLT activities must:

- Participate in the risk management process as appropriate;
- Ensure operators hold a current high risk work licence for FLTs;
- Ensure operators are competent in operating the specific FLT;
- Ensure that safe working practices are developed;
- Ensure operators are instructed in those safe working practices;
- Ensure that operators are provided with local information with regard to the work environment; and
- Monitor to ensure these safe working practices are being implemented.

6.1.4 **Forklift Truck Operators:** Must: Hold a current high risk work licence for FLTs (unless under direct supervision for the purpose of training);

- Ensure they are familiar with the specific FLT, in the specific environment, prior to commencing operations;
- Adhere to any verbal or written direction relating to the FLT activity, and attending any toolbox meeting;
- Take action to identify potential hazards prior to the start of work;
- Take action to avoid, eliminate or minimise hazards of which they are aware;
- Report all hazards/incidents to their supervisor and enter them into SARAH;
- Comply with safe work instructions; and
- Ensure that the forklift is registered and that they hold a current drivers licence, if operating the forklift on a gazetted roadway.

6.1.5 **Staff:** Must:

- Adhere to all occupational health and safety instructions pertaining to forklift activities; and
- Not operate a FLT if they do not hold a current FLT licence.
- Only operate an FLT under direct supervision for the purpose of training.

7. Tools

7.1 The following tools are associated with this procedure and can be accessed via [Forklifts - Occupational Health & Safety](#):

- Forklift Pre-Start Checklist

- Authorisation to Drive Forklift form

8. Records

8.1 For OHS Records document retention please refer to:

[Monash University OHS Records Management Procedure.](#)

DEFINITIONS

A comprehensive list of definitions is provided in the [Definitions tool](#). Definitions specific to this procedure are provided below.

Key word	Definition
Forklift Truck	A forklift truck (FLT) is a specific type of powered mobile plant that can be used to lift, stack and transfer loads. They typically have pronged platforms (tines) that can be raised/lowered for insertion under a load. However, they can also be fitted with alternative lifting attachments. They can be powered by electric, diesel, petrol or liquid petroleum gas.
Forklift Operator	A person who holds a current licence to perform high risk work for FLT operation, and who has demonstrated competency in doing so. A person may operate a forklift for the purpose of being trained to obtain a high risk work licence when under the direct supervision of a licenced person.
Register of Operators	A register containing copies of the current licence (including expiry date and local training record).
Mast	A support member providing guide ways that permit vertical movement of the carriage.
Rated Capacity	The maximum capacity that the FLT is designed to lift as determined by the manufacturer.
Actual Capacity	The capacity at maximum lift height (shown on the nameplate). Forklifts with a tilting mast shall show capacities at maximum height for both mast vertical and mast tilted forward positions.
Alternative Capacity	The designated capacity for other load centre distances, attachments, lift heights and truck altitudes/positions, based upon stability testing data.

GOVERNANCE

Parent policy	OHS Policy
Supporting schedules	N/A
Associated procedures	<p>Australian and International standards</p> <p>AS/NZS 4801:2001 Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems – specifications with guidance for use.</p> <p>OHSAS 18001:2007 Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems – requirements</p> <p>AS 2359.1 2019 Powered Industrial Trucks, Part 1: General requirements</p> <p>AS 2359.2 2013 Powered Industrial Trucks- Operations</p> <p>Worksafe Victoria documents</p> <p>Forklift Safety Checklist</p> <p>Forklifts- Developing a traffic management plan</p> <p>Monash University OHS documents</p> <p>Development of Safe Work Instructions Guidelines</p> <p>Isolation of Plant Procedure</p> <p>OHS Risk Management Procedure</p> <p>Records Management Procedure</p> <p>Roles, Committees and Responsibilities Procedure</p>

Legislation mandating compliance	Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)
Category	Operational
Endorsement	Monash University OHS Committee 8 September 2020
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Procedure owner	Manager, OH&S
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Content enquiries	ohshelpline@monash.edu

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date Approved	Changes made to document
1	August 2013	Forklift Safety Procedure, v1
1.1	July 2015	Updated hyperlinks throughout to new OH&S website
2	May 2017	Comprehensive review and modifications. Procedure now an overarching framework to enable development of local procedures.
2.1	August 2017	Updated logos in header Updated OHS Regulations to 2017
2.2	September 2020	Minor amendment to scope and purpose. General language revision and alteration Updates to current standards Updates to links that had been relocated on external and internal webpages