

SSOW 26: LOADED BRAKE TESTING

Issue Number: 02

Date of Issue: 31/01/2026

Based on: RA18

PURPOSE

To ensure loaded brake testing is carried out safely and in a controlled manner, preventing vehicle instability, brake-system failures, load shifts, and harm to personnel or property. This SSOW sets out the safe working practices, competency requirements, and equipment standards required to conduct loaded brake tests in accordance with RA18, manufacturer guidance, and workshop rules.

PPE REQUIREMENTS

For this activity, the following PPE must be worn

					
☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
High-vis Vest / Jacket (BS EN 471)	Safety Boots (EN ISO 20345:2011) (S3)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- Competent and authorised HGV Technicians only.
- Qualified HGV driver with NPORS/CPCS plant mover certification available for manoeuvring and load distribution.
- Familiarity with RA18, brake-testing procedures, and manufacturer instructions.
- Training in safe use of brake-testing equipment, rollers, and calibration requirements.
- Awareness of vehicle-pit safety and exclusion zones.
- Understanding of pre-use inspections for brake systems and lifting/securing equipment.

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- Calibrated and serviceable brake-tester.
- Suitable load (concrete blocks or plant) secured using approved equipment.
- Barriers or cones to segregate the brake-testing area.
- Vehicle chocks and safe parking controls.

SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK

- Only competent authorised personnel are permitted to operate the HGV workshop brake test.
- Under no circumstances are personnel to be walking around the area when a brake test is being performed. The HGV Technician performing the brake test must ensure that the area is clear of personnel prior to commencing.
- All vehicles must be loaded with weight distributed on the axles as per the manufacturer’s guidelines. This will be carried out as per the HGV Technicians’ instruction.
- A qualified HGV driver who also holds NPORS/CPCS plant mover must be available at all times to operate the lorry and manoeuvre the load for weight distribution.
- Under no circumstances is plant to be moved on the lorry bed/trailer inside the HGV workshop, the vehicle must be driven off of the pit a safe distance away for the plant to be manoeuvred.
- All brake tests must be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions and requirements.
- The brake test must be calibrated and serviceable.

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- Full PPE must be worn at all times.
- Good housekeeping practices must be maintained at all times.
- NO smoking is permitted in the works area, use designated smoking points.
- Works area to be segregated with the use of barriers where possible.
- All vehicles must be banked over the vehicle pit to be brake tested.
- When the vehicle is within the HGV workshop the driver must not leave the cab.
- Where HGVs are deemed exempt from loaded brake tests a sufficient risk assessment must be in place and reviewed annually or if circumstances change. i.e., road sweepers. See Guide to Maintaining Road Worthiness documentation.

LOADED BRAKE TEST

- Only trained competent HGV Technicians are permitted to perform the brake test.
- The vehicle brake system must be checked for visible faults prior to commencing i.e., leaks, worn components etc. carried out by a competent HGV Technician.
- The HGV Technician must liaise with the driver to ensure that adequate weight is loaded to the vehicle. This can be added using concrete blocks or Lynch plant machines.
- Where concrete blocks are used these must be appropriately secured using approved securing equipment.
- Please note that the use of concrete blocks will fall under lifting operations (loading/unloading) – see lifting operations SSOW + RA.
- When loaded the driver must be banked over the vehicle pit for the HGV Technician to perform the brake test.
- HGV Technician to bank the lorry onto the brake testing rollers aligning the wheels with the machine as per the tester's instructions.
- The lorry should be put into a neutral gear with the engine running.
- Follow the operator's guidance regarding when to release the handbrake and allow the wheels to spin on the rollers.
- The HGV Technician will activate the rollers to rotate the wheels.
- The driver will gradually apply the foot brake as instructed by the tester.
- The machine will measure and record the braking force, imbalance and efficiency.
- Release the brake when prompted and allow the rollers to stop.
- Should a parking brake test be carried out, the same procedure will apply, however the handbrake will be applied instead of the foot brake.
- The HGV Technician will review the brake test results and ensure results are acceptable as per legal requirements and manufacturer guidelines. They will check for brake efficiency %, brake force imbalance (should be within limits) and unusual fluctuations in the braking force.
- If any faults are found, the issues will be documented, and repairs or adjustments will be scheduled before the lorry is permitted to return to service. Vehicle is VOR.
- If the vehicle passes, record the results for compliance and maintenance logs.
- Should the load need to be moved at any point during the loaded brake test for weight distribution (ensuring enough weight on the axle being brake tested) the operation will cease immediately under the HGV Technicians instruction.
- The driver will exit the HGV workshop to flat level ground outside and move the load as required.
- The driver will then re-enter the workshop under the HGV Technicians' instructions and the process can recommence.
- Should a vehicle loaded with plant be required to enter the public highway the load must be secured appropriately. See the transport safety manual for additional information.

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IDENTIFIED RISKS

The SSOW above has been compiled after identifying the following risks from this activity

- Failure in brake tester equipment & brake systems failure
- Vehicle instability and loss of control
- Musculoskeletal injuries from manual handling activities.
- Loss of load
- Vehicle/People interface
- Slips/Trips/Falls

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE REFER TO RISK ASSESSMENT RA18

Owner: Head of HSQE	Version: 2	LF266
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