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A1 Basic Principles of Loading

A1.1 Introduction

This information is for Network Rail and its Contractors whom are certified to load and secure particular traffics.

If there is any doubt about which methods to adopt always seek the advice of a person competent in the particular traffic or loading pattern.

The information and instructions in the Loading Manual apply for all infrastructure wagons, irrespective of ownership or haulier over Network Rail infrastructure.

Weight distribution or methods of loading and securing, shall not be altered without the authorisation of a Network Rail Loading Standards competent person. Any new, unusual or rarely seen traffic types not currently covered by the loading manual shall be brought to the attention of Network Rail Loading Standards competent person (please see copy of briefing note attached to NR/L3/NDS/308 for contact details).

A1.2 Loading wagons

Wagons shall only be loaded and unloaded at authorised locations. Agreed methods of working, safe systems of work and any associated lift plans shall be adhered to.

Methods of loading traffic on and/or in to wagons at origin shall be compatible with possible different unloading methods used at destination.

To mitigate against the risk of working at height, it is not permitted to climb onto wagons unless the wagon is designed to do so or a safe system of work is in place.

A1.2.1 Before loading a wagon

Always check:

- a) the wagon is in a fit condition for the required load
- b) the wagons can be unloaded at the destination
- c) door securing mechanisms are in working order
- d) bolsters, stanchions and securing straps (where applicable) are fit for use

A1.2.2 Whilst loading the wagon

Always check:

- e) the load is as compact as possible with void spaces kept to a minimum
- f) the load is secure, this will prevent the load moving in transit
- g) the stability of the load to prevent collapsed or toppling
- h) stanchions are fit for use and in a safe position
- i) when loading traffic of uneven lengths, the longer pieces are placed at the bottom of the load with shorter pieces on the top. Shorter length pieces should be loaded inside longer lengths
- j) when mixed weight traffics are loaded together, the heavier items shall be loaded in a lower position with the lighter items loaded on top. This helps prevent damage to the load and maintains a more stable load.

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A1.2.2.1 Securing straps

- k) Do not apply securing straps until the load is in place on the wagon and any lifting equipment has been released.
- l) If the securing strap will be in contact with rough or sharp surfaces, protect the securing strap by using wear sleeves or other suitable materials.
- m) Always confirm that the strap protection remains in position when tightening straps.
- n) Tighten the straps from both sides of the wagon using a suitable size 'Tommy Bar'.
- o) Securing straps shall be positioned where the risk of working at height can be kept to a minimum.

A1.2.2.2 Timber dunnage

- p) Confirm that the timber dunnage to be used to the support loads is in good condition.
- q) Timbers placed between tiers of traffic must be of sufficient strength and numbers to support the upper tiers.
- r) Steel must not be used between tiers.
- s) Any dunnage used on wagon bolsters must be fixed in position (care must be taken not to block stanchion pockets or foul winch positions) to prevent movement.

A1.2.3 After the wagon is loaded

Always check:

- the load and securing meets the requirement of the specific loading pattern
- the load is not out of gauge
- doors are closed and secured
- the loaded wagon is safe to proceed onto Network Rail Infrastructure

Loaded wagons shall be examined by a "competent" person in accordance with the loading pattern requirements.