

## Mini Excavator Trailer

The rules and procedures in force where people are at work may require the person responsible for this equipment to carry out a specific risk assessment.



### It is important to read all of this leaflet BEFORE using the Mini Excavator Trailer

- Plan your work and think ahead to make sure you will always be working safely.
- It is important to read all of this leaflet and others provided before you use the Mini Excavator Trailer.
- If your vehicle/trailer combination exceeds 3.5 tonnes and you are "at work", then the tachograph rules apply. Find out about tachographs.
- This Mini Excavator Trailer is designed solely to carry a mini excavator, up to its rated carrying capacity, being towed by a road legal vehicle on made up roads. It must not be used for any other purpose.
- It must not be used for carrying passengers or livestock.
- The use of this mini Excavator Trailer can cause injury or damage if it is not used in a careful and controlled way.
- You must have at least the following items of personal protective equipment: a safety helmet complying with EN397; Strong gloves for handling wire ropes; High-visibility clothing complying with EN471 when working on the public highway or on a construction site.
- You should not use this Mini Excavator Trailer unless you are authorised, and have an appropriate driving licence. See Driving Licence.
- This Mini Excavator Trailer must not be used by minors, or by anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- The manual manoeuvring of this Mini Excavator Trailer should be carried out by one or more able bodied adults. Anyone with either a temporary or permanent disability must seek expert advice before using it.

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vehicles over 7.5 tonnes, articulated vehicles, and other unusual vehicles, check the speed limit for your vehicle before you drive.

- You must not travel in the right-hand lane of a motorway with three lanes or more.
- Drive at a speed that is well within the capabilities of your vehicle, yourself and to the road and weather conditions.
- Should your trailer start to snake or swerve (usually caused by excessive speed), ease off the accelerator and reduce speed gently.
- Reversing will require practice but always get out of the vehicle to check any blind spots or seek assistance.
- If the Maximum Authorised Mass (the combined maximum designed capacity of towing vehicle and trailer) exceeds 3500KG, and the vehicle is used for hire or required for the commercial carriage of goods, a tachograph must be used. The driver of the towing vehicle in these circumstances must comply with the Drivers' hours and Tachograph Rules for Goods Vehicles in the UK and /Europe. These rules can be obtained from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency ([www.vosa.gov.uk](http://www.vosa.gov.uk)).
- If your equipment does not work properly do not attempt to repair it. Contact the company.

### USING THE MINI EXCAVATOR TRAILER

- The addition of a loaded trailer to a vehicle will inevitably have a very serious effect on the vehicle's performance:
  - Starting, particularly on hills, will be more difficult.
  - Stopping can take longer distances.
  - Cornering and negotiating sharp bends requires extra care.
  - The rate of acceleration will be reduced.
  - Fuel consumption will be increased.
  - Driving style will need to be modified. The performance mentioned above will require:
  - Greater concentration.
  - The additional length will require greater care when overtaking and cornering.
  - Reduced acceleration will require longer distances required when overtaking.
  - On side winds will be more noticeable.
  - The slipstream and suction effect of large commercial vehicles can affect the stability of the vehicle.
  - You must not exceed the speed limits.
  - When towing a trailer, the towed and towed are not necessarily safe speeds.
  - 30mph limit applies on all roads with street lighting unless signs show otherwise. On other roads the speed limit is 50mph, on a single carriageway and 60mph on dual carriageways and motorways, for general vehicles under 7.5 tonnes.
  - The speed limits may be different for different types of roads.
- Please store this leaflet safely. It may be required for further information

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## Before Starting Work...



### OPERATORS

- The driver of the towing vehicle has the responsibility for the safe operation of the towing vehicle and trailer.
- The driver of the towing vehicle must hold an appropriate driving licence to tow this trailer.
- The driver of the towing vehicle must establish that the towing vehicle is capable of towing the trailer safely. The vehicle manufacturer's recommended towing limit, which is found in vehicle manufacturer's handbook and on the VIN plate on the Maximum Gross Weight (G.V.W.) of the trailer will be found on the identification plate, normally located in the 'A' frame, close to the towing hitch.
- The driver of the towing vehicle must have at least the following items of personal protective equipment:
  - A safety helmet, complying with EN397, when working on a construction site.
  - Strong gloves for handling wire ropes.
  - High-visibility clothing complying with EN471 when working on the public highway or on a construction site.
  - Appropriate personal protective equipment.

### MINI EXCAVATOR TRAILER

- Check your Mini Excavator Trailer, if anything is damaged, do not use the trailer and contact the hire company for further advice. Ensure that the trailer is compatible with the towbar on the towing vehicle – it will be either a 50mm ball or an eye coupling.
- If the trailer is to be detached from the towing vehicle, always apply the trailer hand brake. Lower the jockey wheel and support legs. It may also be necessary to unhook the towbar from the towing vehicle. If the trailer is left unattended ensure that it is protected from theft with either a hitch lock, wheel clamp or other suitable security device.
- The driver of the towing vehicle should carry out the following checks each time the trailer is used:
  - Check that the trailer is in good condition and ready to use by your hire company. You must make sure that it has not been damaged or altered since then.
  - Are all the lights undamaged?
  - Are the 2-core cable and plug registration number and style?
  - Is the correct number plate fitted? (both coupling undamaged and correctly connected to the trailer handbrake mechanism?)
  - Are the tyre pressures correct? (seek advice from your hire company) and all tyres free from cuts, bulges and adequate tread, (including the spare)?
  - Tires must have a continuous tread depth of at least 1.60mm on cars, light vans and trailers, across the centre of the tread.
  - Are you satisfied that the wheel nuts/bolts are tightened to the correct



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if the hitch, if the rear of the vehicle rises, the coupling is fully locked onto the tow ball.

### EYE COUPLING

- Apply the trailer handbrake and check the position of the eye into the jaws of the coupling. Insert the pin through the safety and eye making sure that the safety locking catch on the towing pin is properly applied and that the safety pin or clip is fitted.

### BOTH COUPLINGS

- Wind the jockey wheel completely up, and ensure that the jockey wheel is fully locked and is not fully raised. Check that it is not fouling the brake mechanism.
- Attach safety breakaway cable onto the special rings most towbars have or loop it around the towbar. Ensure that the cable and towbar are correctly connected and there is enough slack for cornering but will not touch the ground. This cable will apply the hand brake should the trailer become detached whilst towing.
- Check the towbar to the hitch. If you are using a towbar with two sockets, use the one with the black cover flap. The plug will only fit one way, with the keyway and groove at the bottom.
- Check the operation of the following trailer lights:
  - Correct operation of towbar lights.
  - Number plate illumination on trailers (wide).
  - Two brake lights.
  - Two red reflective triangle.

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### LOADING A FREE STANDING MINI EXCAVATOR TRAILER

- Great care should be taken when loading a Mini Excavator Trailer. The weight of the excavator should be considered that it will be considerably more difficult to move when fully loaded. Place it where it can easily be moved or where the towing vehicle can easily reverse to it to hitch.
- Always apply the handbrake. In addition it may be necessary to check the wheels on the excavator.
- When you need to move a trailer manually, raise and securely clamp the rear support legs, leaving the jockey wheel down. A Mini Excavator Trailer is heavy, get help to move it. To improve the manoeuvrability of a Mini Excavator trailer lower, and wind down the jockey wheel until the wheels of the front axle are clear of the ground. Do not pull beyond your own capabilities, seek help.
- An unattached Mini Excavator Trailer can be a safety hazard. To prevent this from happening you must lower the jockey wheel to a position where the trailer is level, and then lower the rear support legs to the ground and firmly apply the clamps.
- Lower the tailgate/ramp of a Mini Excavator Trailer. Take care as it is heavy, seek assistance if necessary.
- Sweep the floor of the trailer ensuring it is clear of mud, rubble, brick and concrete dust to ensure good traction for the excavator.
- Drive the Mini Excavator lining it up to the bottom of the ramp.
- Raise the dipper arm ahead of the excavator. Drive the excavator slowly up the loading ramp, keeping it centred on the ramp.
- When the excavator reaches the top of the ramp and moves onto the flat floor, be warned, it will lock forward over the apex.
- Drive the excavator forward to a point where the end of the rear support is positioned over the end of the ramp.
- Lower the dipper arm, positioning the bucket teeth under the rail at the rear of the towbar 'A' frame and lower the doper blade to the floor.
- Restrain the excavator using either adjustable straps or chains capable of bearing the weight of the excavator. The straps should be fixed to a secure tieing point on both the excavator and the trailer. (Continued overleaf...)



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