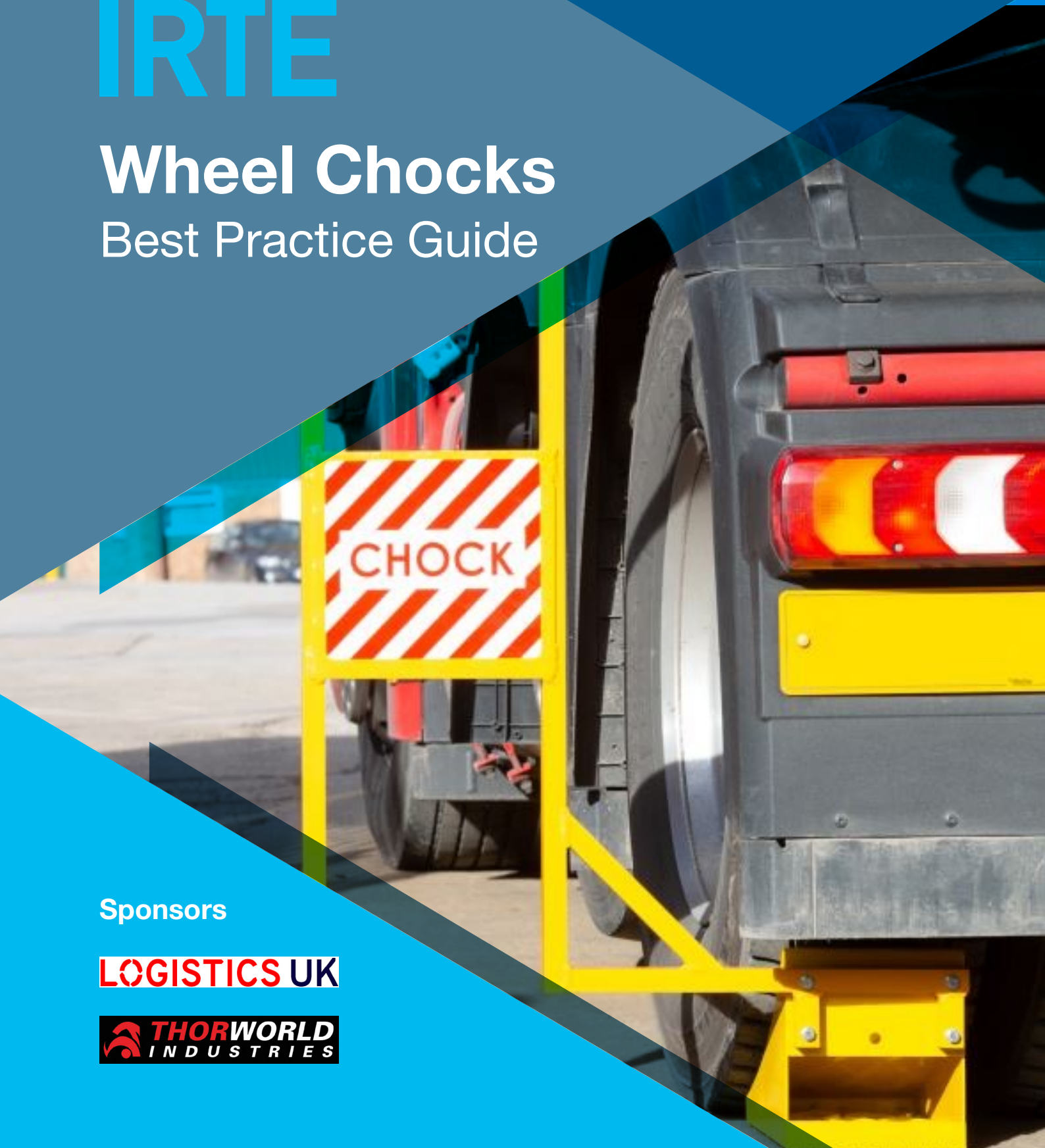
IRTE

Wheel Chocks

Best Practice Guide



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IRTE

IRTE is one of the most respected names in UK transport, and has always been recognised as an impartial voice of industry. IRTE publishes an industry leading technical journal, Transport Engineer, every month. Its web version www.transportengineer.org.uk contains searchable editorial archive, daily online news updates, a supplier directory, e-zine newsletter, jobs, events, whitepapers and more. IRTE hosts regular technical seminars and forums and works alongside DfT to promote efficiency and best practice. Recent events have covered biofuels, trips and falls from vehicles, truck operation, fuel efficiency and the Road Safety Act. IRTE's technical committee produces regular industry guidance on key topics. See page 16 for IRTE's range of guidance documents, all of which are free to download from www.soe.org.uk. IRTE members come from a wide variety of transport-related roles. These include workshop managers, fleet engineers, transport managers, company directors, apprentices and technicians in the light and heavy goods, vehicle, and bus and coach sectors.

Society of Operations Engineers

IRTE is one of four professional sectors within the professional engineering institution the Society of Operations Engineers. The Society supports and encourages its 16,000 members throughout their careers and is committed to their ongoing growth and professional development. It is licensed by the Engineering Council for registration at EngTech, IEng and CEng levels and by the Society for the Environment at REnvP and CEnv level.

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LOGISTICS UK

Logistics UK is one of the biggest business groups in the UK, supporting, shaping and standing up for efficient logistics. It represents members from the road, rail, sea and air industries, as well as the buyers of freight services such as retailers and manufacturers whose businesses depend on the efficient movement of goods. It speaks to government with one voice on behalf of the whole sector.

THORWORLD INDUSTRIES

Thorworld Industries is the UK's leading loading and unloading specialist. With more than 40 years of loading and unloading experience, Thorworld Industries offers a comprehensive range of solutions from container ramps, loading platforms and dock levellers to wheel chocks, loading and unloading accessories and bespoke products.

Preface

My husband, Bob Brawn, loved his work with the Freight Transport Association, now Logistics UK, as a Vehicle Inspection Engineer.

He was a professional, safety conscious engineer with many years of experience in the commercial vehicle maintenance industry. He was much loved by his family and friends and hugely respected as an experienced and knowledgeable engineer by his colleagues within the industry. He will be missed by everyone who knew him but particularly by me.

I know Bob would be grateful that his death has brought about the introduction of new procedures which are aimed at protecting others. His family wish for part of his legacy to be that some good comes from the tragic incident that took him from us and we would therefore encourage you all to use the information in this guidance document in your daily work.

I hope that you all continue to enjoy your work as much as Bob did but, as importantly, that you all stay safe.

Pamela Brawn

IRTE has collaborated with Logistics UK and a diverse working group of experts from across our industry to produce this technical guidance document. Contributors include operators, equipment suppliers and representative bodies, as well as DVSA and HSE.

The aim has been to produce a simple but effective wheel chock guidance document that ensures safety at work for those involved in the inspection, maintenance or repair of commercial vehicles, buses or coaches. We cannot overemphasise the risks associated with these activities or the critical safety role that wheel chocks play. The working group is committed to improving safety and needs your support to achieve this by putting wheel chocks in place whenever they are required.

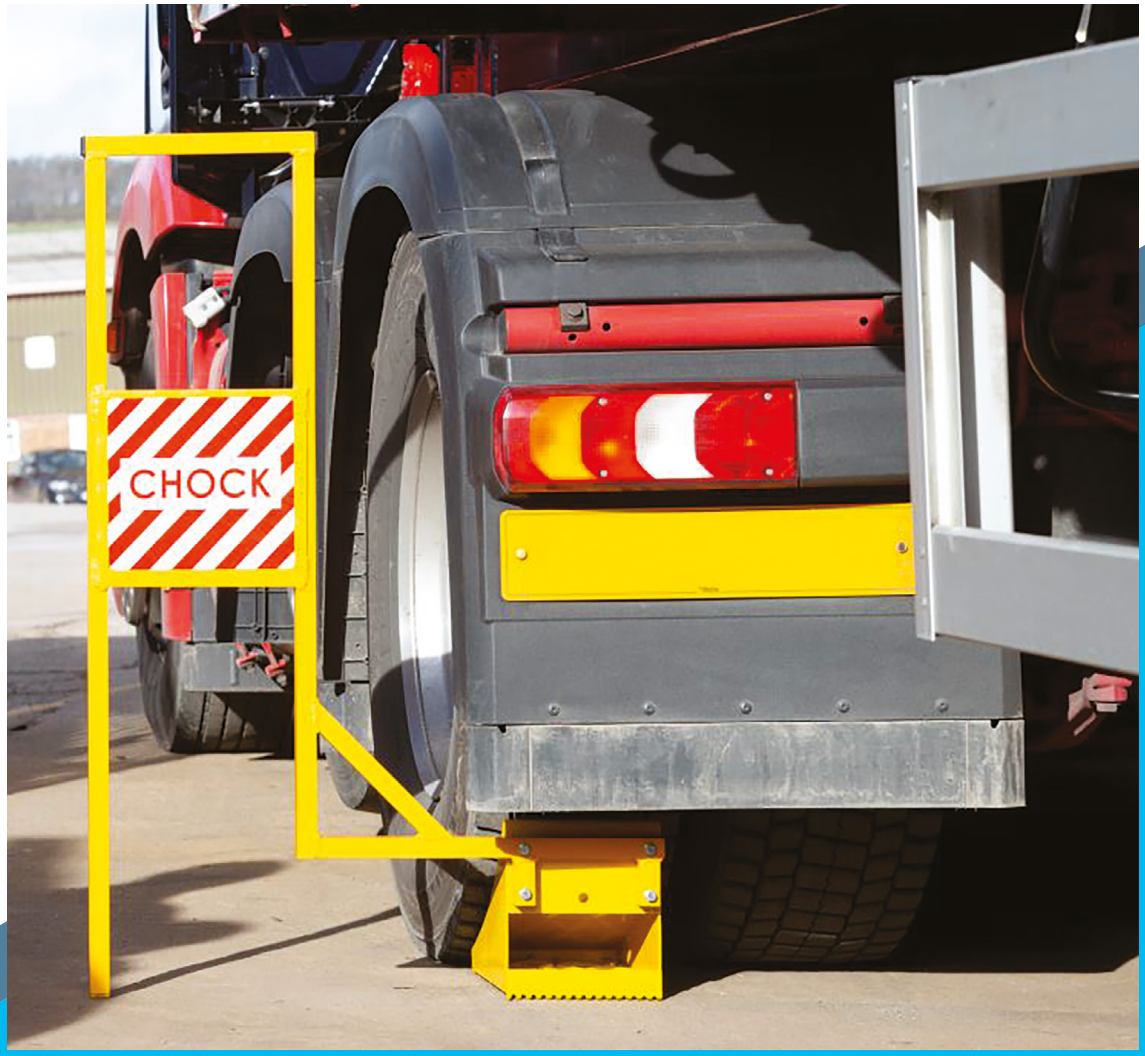
We encourage you to read the guidance document carefully and apply its principles in your work place to ensure your safety and that of those around you.

If you have any questions about how this guidance is applied in your workplace or concerns about the details contained in the document do seek clarification and guidance from your employer.

Introduction

The guide is generic and is intended to support the following in best practice in the prevention of vehicle movement or instability when under inspection, maintenance or repair:

- Commercial vehicles, bus and coach workshops/premises
- Offsite working/workers
- Roadside attendance/breakdown, recovery or repair



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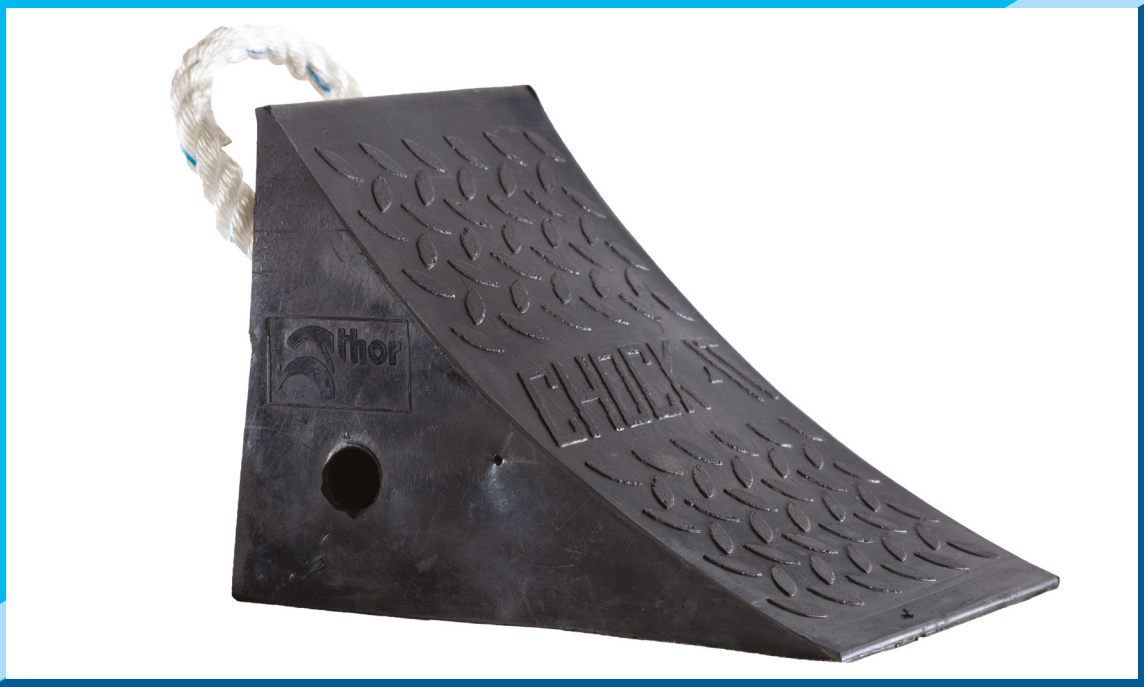
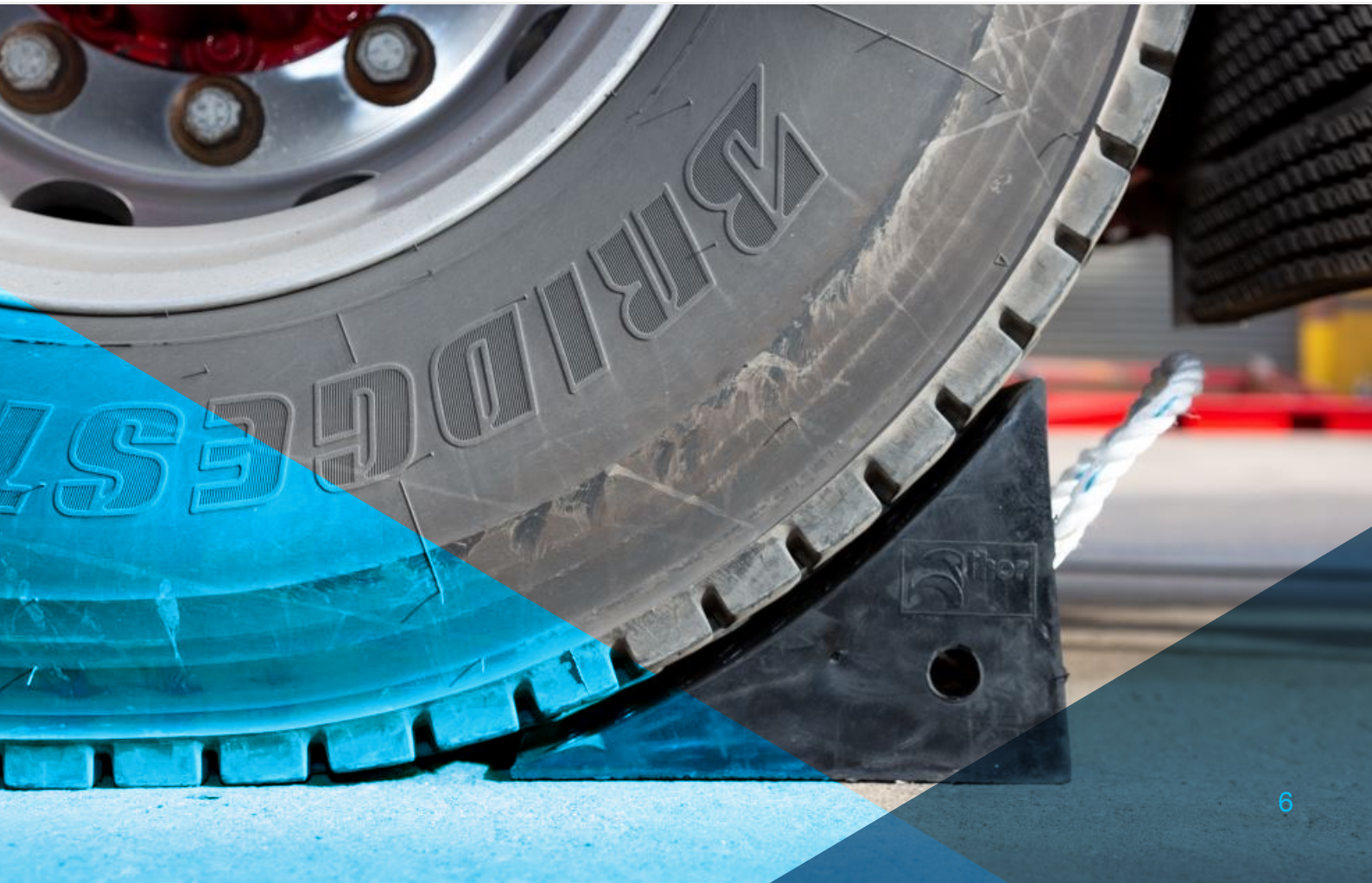


When to use wheel chocks

Wheel chocks should be considered for use when a vehicle is being maintained, repaired or inspected.

It should be noted that a vehicle is at greater risk of inadvertent movement when:

- The handbrake is released
- A wheel is removed
- One wheel or more is off the ground
- During repairs where an axle is lifted (even if axle is on stands)
- The brakes are off
- Inspection or work is being conducted on the underside of a vehicle
- The vehicle is on an uneven surface or inclination



The best use of wheel chocks

The throughput of vehicles and/or the number of bays affects the number of wheel chocks needed within the repair facility, as will the different types of vehicles that are repaired or maintained.

A ‘one size fits all’ should not be considered as best practice.

Best practice is that appropriate chocks are to be used when a vehicle is being subject to repair, maintenance, or inspection, if the above conditions apply. The above list is not exhaustive, and it may be necessary to use chocks irrespective of the type of work being carried out.

A similar approach for the maintenance and repair of vehicles offsite should be considered. Vehicle type and weight should be considered. Offsite repair vehicles must be equipped with necessary wheel chocks. Wheel chocks should be used whenever a vehicle is being repaired at roadside.

The most appropriate size wheel chock requires an ‘on the job’ assessment by the user who is trained and is aware of the correct type and size of wheel chock to use depending on the vehicle under inspection or repair.

Where a vehicle remains with all wheels in contact with the ground it is adequate to chock one wheel, front and rear. However, if any wheel is raised off the ground using a jack then one axle must be completely chocked, i.e. both offside and nearside, front and rear of the wheels. This will mitigate side movement and instability.

Auditing of the safety check completion

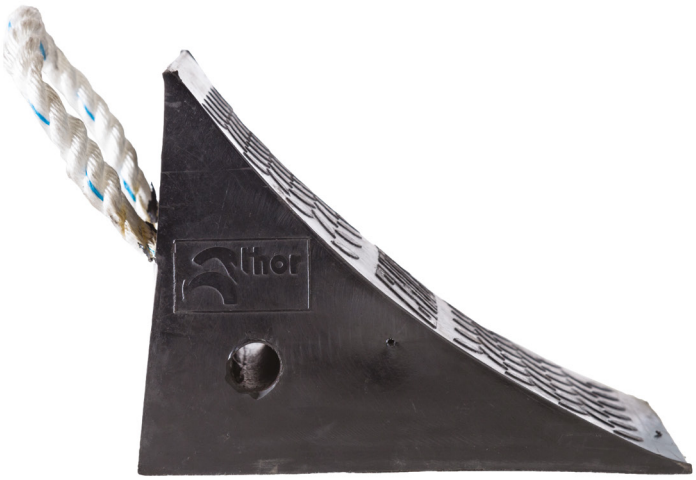
As shown and described in the IRTE Workshop Accreditation Scheme, the workshop audit process should include the inspection of wheel chocks to ensure that they are safe to use. They must be serviceable, clean and the correct type and size, and suitable for the vehicle(s) currently being maintained. This may need a number of different wheel chock sizes available for use on different size wheels & tyres and/or vehicles/ trailers of 3.5 tonnes and up. These checks shall be logged, recorded, and signed off as serviceable. Non-serviceable wheel chocks must be removed from use. Best practice is that appropriate chocks be available.

Good visual examples of use should be made available, showing what to do and what not to do. Examples of too small or too big, too narrow, and inadequate should be pictured to emphasise good practice.

There should be relevant risk assessments in place, and these should include the use of wheel chocks.

The risk assessments should be referred to and reviewed dynamically both prior to and during the period of work being undertaken, taking into consideration aspects of the work and the circumstances. User awareness training and updates should be recorded or logged and signed by the workshop staff and/or users.

Information in this document may be considered common sense by many, however, records show that incidents occur and therefore there is value in refreshing those that are involved in the process and mentioning regularly at a ‘toolbox’ meet.



Workshop standards

The IRTE Workshop Accreditation Scheme includes the checking of wheel chocks' availability and condition and that where possible they are seen to be used during the audit. This includes recording checks as to their condition.

Any vehicle used for offsite working should be included in the audit to ensure that wheel chocks are available as part of the vehicle inventory. A system of checking the quality and condition of all wheel chocks should be in place.

Type of wheel chock

There are many wheel chocks available from various suppliers and made from different materials.

Depending upon the workshop, working area, and the type of work being carried out, the material best suited should be used.

A DVSA test report is available, out lining results on the testing of various materials at authorised test facilities (ATF's).

The shape and size of wheel chocks is also covered. The correct size of wheel chock is important as are the overall dimensions (wheel chock width and/or curvature) and material manufacture.

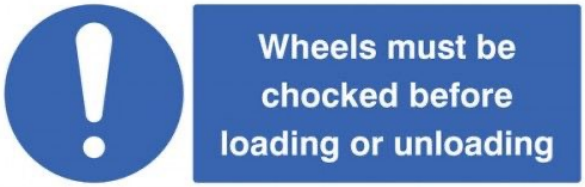
Ease of use

Ease of use should also be taken into consideration. Rope or grasping rod, pairs or individual wheel chocks may be best suited. Ropes as used by the aviation industry are useful and can be matched. A handle for removing without being too close can be useful.

Reference should be made to the suppliers guide as to the correct size and type of wheel chock to be used. In addition, colour coding can be useful to determine which wheel chock to use.

Notices

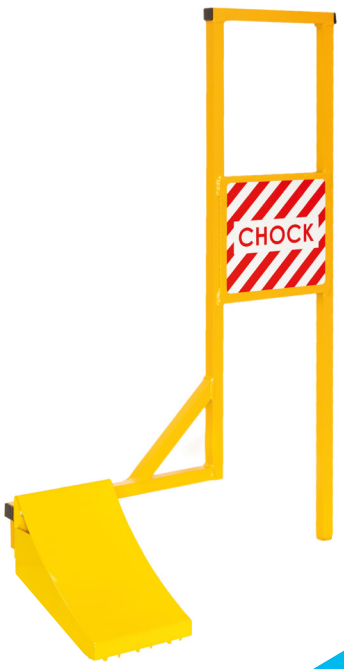
As with all workshops, visual aids play an important part in promoting safe use. Well placed visual aids and warning signs advising of the correct use of wheel chocks could be displayed and align with good practice.



Additional safety measures

Additional safety measures should be included in any relevant risk assessment to prevent movement of the vehicle while wheel chocks are deployed, for example:

- Removal of ignition keys/immobilisation of vehicle
- A warning system to signal “DO NOT MOVE – Vehicle under repair!”
- Any roadside attendance regardless of level ground or slight slope should include the use of wheel chocks even when looking to uplift a vehicle
- Off-site maintenance or repair should include wheel chocks in all cases in addition to ensuring the vehicle is in an isolated area



IRTE is a professional sector of the Society of Operations Engineers

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