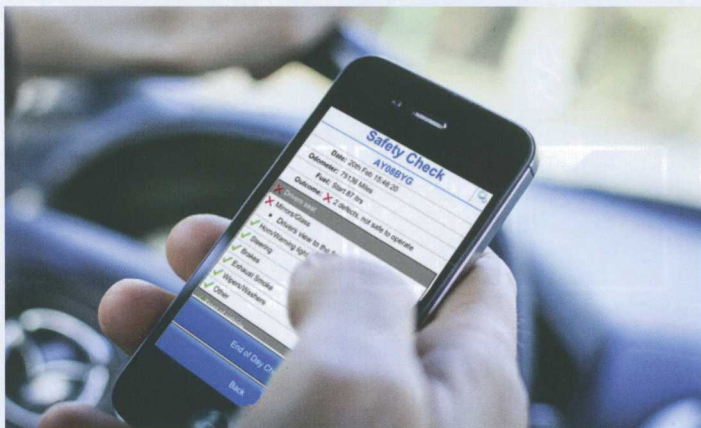


# Inspecting the parts that all drivers have to reach...

Ainsley Fraser looks at how smart systems are helping to keep track.



Our Editor's heads up on this article stressed the importance of driver awareness, familiarity and understanding of vehicle parts and equipment ... to keep the truck safe, fit for purpose and avoid needless breakdowns. Absolutely. Actually, it's a lot more than that. It's obligatory ... it's a legal and regulatory requirement and we (driver, operator, vehicle owner, supply chain) are all in it together.

At the sharp end, the driver is effectively 'the manager' of a valuable mobile business asset when it's on the road – and it is his or her responsibility to ensure the fully functional operation, legality, safety and

compliance of the vehicle. Knowledge and training are relevant too. Vehicle responsibilities and obligations are included within Driver CPC courses, very often driver employment conditions, operating manuals – and of course, there is a robust enforcement regime to make sure we all comply.

Certainly, some of the clearest advice on what is involved can be found in the DVSA's Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness, available as a pdf download at [goo.gl/RxcKBj](http://goo.gl/RxcKBj).

Elsewhere, the trade associations – particularly the RHA and FTA, cover the subject well and in depth in a range of publications and handbooks.

The vast majority of operators in our industry go to great lengths to run their fleets very professionally, with well maintained, quality genuine parts equipped vehicles and highly trained and experienced drivers. In the waste industry particularly, that matters – as we work in a sector which the HSE, DVSA and the Police, amongst others, regard as 'high risk'.

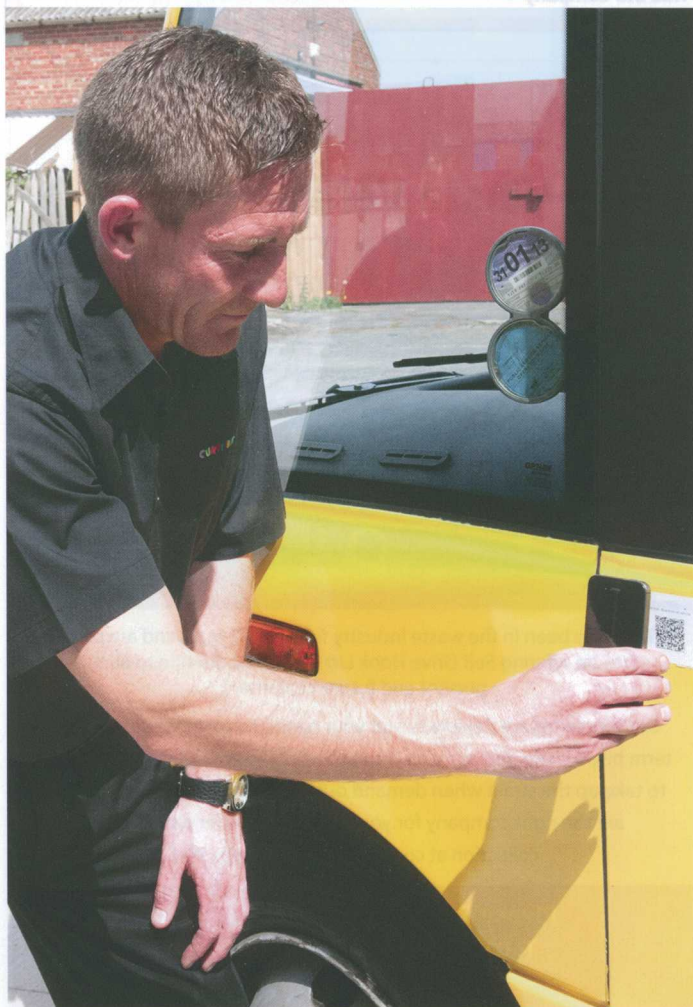
So let's assume that our driver has ticked all the boxes and he pretty fully understands the mechanical basics,

all main components and parts of both the truck and the equipment mounted on it. The mindset discipline should be that the driver's truck always starts the day's work with zero defects – as the last thing any of us need on a busy day is a stop, a fixed penalty notice and a PG9.

To help him maintain that level of efficiency, help is at hand. The driver's 'daily obligations' begin with the Walk Around Check and O-licence requirements, including proper record keeping – even if it is paper based. Now there are also a range of hand-held information capture systems (including self-standing devices and systems linked to your smartphone) which can help carry out the job simply and efficiently – and do a lot more besides.

Paul Clarke, Managing Director of Truckfile, a leader in the field which works directly with some truck manufacturers says, "Implementing and using the system is as simple as scan, inspect and track. The inspection process is recorded on a database and, in the event of a defect being notified, the system can communicate the problem back to base, identify the part which needs to be replaced and even raise a workshop job sheet for its rectification."

The key to the system is QR codes; matrix bar codes designed for the automotive industry, which are used to identify the vehicle, the driver and the inspection points around the vehicle. >



The driver places the hand-held reader (iPhone, Android phone, tablet etc.) in close proximity to the QR codes and the device will read the tag and display the appropriate check to be completed. The inspection is completed with simple tap screen responses. When defects are discovered, the driver selects the defect description from a pre-defined list and, if needed, further text descriptions can be added. The driver takes responsibility and indicates whether or not the vehicle is safe to operate with the noted defect.

When the check is complete, a copy is saved to the hand held device. The driver can then show the completed check if stopped at the roadside – and the device can also display the last seven days checks as well.

With the waste industry and its vehicle operations always under close scrutiny, maybe these easy to use intelligent electronic systems are a welcome addition to both drivers and operators ability to demonstrate compliance – and improve efficiency at the same time.

And finally, a word about the parts which may be ordered as and when defects are found. Right now – and probably being led by the big hire, contract and leasing fleets, we are seeing a strong trend towards insistence on the use of manufacturer's genuine parts. Why? If the vehicle is being operated by an end-user who is one or more steps removed from the owner of the asset, warranty claims can be rejected if component failure is found to have occurred where alternative aftermarket parts of products have been fitted to the vehicle.

truckfile  
 Defects on Drivers Daily Check Sheet for PAUL1

Date of Inspection: 07/03/2014 at 11:13:18  
 Inspected by: Paul Whittingham  
 Overall Result: Contains at least 1 defect

Area	Question	Answer
X Drivers seat	Other	General Damage, damage to ms using. Reported as a non safety defect
X Front of vehicle	Other	Damage, damage not using
X Office host	Other	Damage, damaged as fitting

Regards,  
 The Truckfile Team

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 Vehicle, Safety Checks

Inspected By: Any  
 Registration/Asset Number: All  
 Depot: All  
 Start Date: 26 March 2013  
 End Date: 14 March 2014

Generated by 'Truck Demo User' on '14 March 2014 at 15:24:53'

Number of matching records: 253

Registration Number	Inspected By	Inspection Date	Mileage	Safe To Drive	Defect Count	Advisory Count	Duration
Y177HPL	Grant Millinship	27 March 2013	65754 mts	Yes	0	0	00:01:10
TRUCKFILE2	Driver 2	08 April 2013	58565 mts	Yes	0	0	00:02:12
TRUCKFILE1	Driver 1	08 April 2013	54852 mts	Yes	0	0	00:01:30
Y177HPL	Grant Millinship	09 April 2013	10002 mts	Yes	1	0	00:06:47
Y177HPL	Grant Millinship	09 April 2013	100420 mts	Yes	0	0	00:02:40
PAUL1	Driver 1	09 April 2013	78563 mts	Yes	1	0	00:01:51
PAUL1	Paul Clarke	09 April 2013	78562 mts	Yes	0	0	00:01:18
PAUL1	Paul Clarke	10 April 2013	78563 mts	Yes	0	0	00:01:11
PAUL1	Paul Clarke	10 April 2013	78563 mts	Yes	2	0	00:01:27
PAUL1	Grant Millinship	10 April 2013	12345 mts	Yes	1	0	00:05:01
PAUL1	Paul Clarke	11 April 2013	78563 mts	Yes	1	0	00:02:02
Y177HPL	Grant Millinship	15 April 2013	58456 mts	Yes	0	0	00:00:33
TESTPRVD01	Grant Millinship	15 April 2013	58456 mts	Yes	0	0	00:00:25
TESTPRVD01	Grant Millinship	15 April 2013	58460 mts	Yes	0	0	00:00:52
TESTPRVD01	Grant Millinship	15 April 2013	58542 mts	Yes	0	0	00:00:37
TRUCKFILE1	Driver 1	25 April 2013	7152 kms	Yes	0	0	00:03:43
Y177HPL	Grant Millinship	27 May 2013	59465 mts	Yes	4	0	02:45:33
Y177HPL	Grant Millinship	31 May 2013	58695 mts	Yes	0	0	00:00:43
Y177HPL	Grant Millinship	31 May 2013	58699 mts	Yes	0	0	00:00:46
Y177HPL	Grant Millinship	02 June 2013	67543 mts	Yes	0	0	00:00:31