HAND SIGNALS FOR DIRECTING VEHICLES

INDUSTRY RECOMMENDED PRACTICE (IRP)

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Disclaimer

This document provides information to assist members of the upstream petroleum industry in Canada wishing to establish a standard set of visual signals for the safe movement of vehicles. The document is not intended to be all-inclusive, but only a guide.

Hand Signals for Directing Vehicles sets out in general the processes and contents of a standard set of signals and pertinent rules for incorporation in the planning of the safe movement of vehicles. Every effort has been made to ensure the reliability of the information contained in this document and to avoid errors or omissions.

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The information in this publication is intended only as a guide and does not provide the only proper way for dealing with the subjects contained herein. It is not a definitive guide to government regulations and does not release readers from their responsibilities under applicable legislation.

Availability

This document, as well as future revisions and additions, is available from

Enform Canada
1538 - 25 Avenue NE
Calgary, AB T2E 8Y3
Phone: (403) 250-9606
Fax: (403) 291-9408
Website: www.enform.ca
# Table of Contents

Preface ................................................................................................................................. ii

Purpose ................................................................................................................................. ii

Scope ................................................................................................................................. ii

Recommended By ........................................................................................................... ii

Acknowledgement ........................................................................................................... iii

Definitions and Terminology ............................................................................................ iv

12.1 Responsibilities ........................................................................................................ 1

12.1.1 General .............................................................................................................. 1

12.1.2 Vehicle Movement ........................................................................................... 1

12.1.3 Safety Precautions ......................................................................................... 1

12.2 Actions ..................................................................................................................... 1

12.2.1 On the Job Hazard Assessment ..................................................................... 1

12.2.2 General ............................................................................................................ 2

12.2.3 Signals .............................................................................................................. 3

12.2.4 Other Safety Considerations ........................................................................ 7

12.2.5 Remember ......................................................................................................... 7

12.2.6 Driver if No Guide is Available ................................................................ 7

12.3 Reaffirmation ......................................................................................................... 7
**Preface**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to improve the safety of personnel and equipment when vehicles are required to move, and the use of a guide is beneficial. The goal is to prevent accidents and injuries that could occur due to blind spots, and undetected movement of personnel and equipment. This will be achieved by improved communication between the driver and the guide. Use of this document will encourage a standard set of directional signals and rules of conduct.

**Scope**

These directional signals are designed to provide visual hand signals to the operator of the vehicle. The signals are related to the **Driving and Stopping** of the vehicle only and are applied to both backward and forward movement.

**Note:** Signals recommended in this document are for the movement of vehicles only. The operation of truck-mounted equipment, such as cranes, winches, etc. is beyond the scope of the document.

The signals included are not meant to be all encompassing but provide the minimum basic signals for the driver and guide. Other signals needed in particularly difficult areas must be discussed and agreed upon in advance by the driver and the guide.

**Recommended By**

Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry
Alberta Workers' Compensation Board
British Columbia Workers’ Compensation Board
Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors
Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors
Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
Canadian Energy Pipeline Association
Canadian Gas Association
Canadian Petroleum Safety Council
Energy Resources Conservation Board
Human Resources Development Canada
Manitoba Energy and Mines
Manitoba Labour
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Hand Signals for Directing Vehicles working committee consisted of representatives from: The Alberta Trucking Industry Safety Association, the Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors, the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors, and the Petroleum Services Association of Canada. It was formed under the auspices of the Canadian Petroleum Safety Council. The committee's mandate was to develop a standard set of Visual Signals for use when vehicles must be positioned and a Guide is utilized for providing directions to the driver. Our thanks to the individuals, companies and associations that gave freely of their time and energy to provide the invaluable support necessary for the completion of the project.

Particular thanks goes out to the following individuals and companies

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Organization Represented</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dennis Pettit</td>
<td>Canadian Freightways Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doug van Eden</td>
<td>Enform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Garrett</td>
<td>Mullen Trucking</td>
<td>PSAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Wedman</td>
<td>Hi-West Well Servicing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Artym</td>
<td>BJ Services Company Canada</td>
<td>ICoTA, PSAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Tessier</td>
<td>Alberta Trucking Industry Safety Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane Kranenberg</td>
<td>Alberta Trucking Industry Safety Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray Sunstrum</td>
<td>Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors</td>
<td>CAODC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Krenz</td>
<td>Mullen Trucking</td>
<td>PSAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Reed</td>
<td>Schlumberger Oilfield Service</td>
<td>PSAC</td>
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Without the contribution of their time and effort completion of documents of these nature would not be possible.

**Revision History**

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**Definitions and Terminology**

Guide (includes spotter): An individual assigned to provide visual signals to the driver for the movement of a vehicle. It is recommended the guide be a co-worker of the driver.
12.1 RESPONSIBILITIES

12.1.1 GENERAL
Drivers are responsible for the safe operation and movement of the vehicle.
Drivers shall not permit anyone to ride on the running boards, fenders of any part of the vehicle except on the seats provided.

12.1.2 VEHICLE MOVEMENT
Whenever possible, the vehicle shall be positioned so as to minimize movement in reverse.
Extreme caution shall be exercised when moving a vehicle. If another individual is available, they should be utilized to guide the driver.

12.1.3 SAFETY PRECAUTIONS
The guide must always be fully visible to the driver and if not fully visible the driver should stop. Wear high visibility clothing (i.e. reflective striping).

12.2 ACTIONS

12.2.1 ON THE JOB HAZARD ASSESSMENT
Prior to moving:
- Plan the move to reduce backing
- Conduct a visual inspection of the desired path
- The driver and the guide have a responsibility to identify potential hazards in the vehicles path, such as, overhead lines, ruts, wellhead, personnel, etc.
- Hazard Control Measures:
  - ensure driver and guide understand the signals to be used
  - ensure driver and guide understand the rules to be used
  - ensure driver and guide are both aware of hazards
  - plan the movement to control or eliminate the hazards
12.2.2 General

When backing, drivers should:

- Where possible, always use a guide
- Stop backing immediately if:
  - the guide is not fully visible
  - visual contact is lost with other workers
  - an emergency stop signal is received from anyone in the area
- Resume backing only after visual contact is restored with the guide or workers on foot
- Use a co-worker as a guide, and
- Sound horn before starting to move the vehicle
- Stop all vehicle movement while the guide is repositioning.

Other Workers should:

- Remember large vehicles have significant blind spots
- Remain clear of the vehicle unless needed to act as a guide, and
- Never cross or step behind the vehicle when it is backing or when its backup signals are on.

Guides should:

- Remain visible to the driver at all times
- Wear high visibility clothing
- Establish and maintain eye contact with the driver
- Position yourself to maintain as clear a view as possible of the intended path of the vehicle
- Stay clear of the vehicle's path
- Avoid walking backward
- Use standard hand signals to communicate with the driver
- Be sure that no one is riding on the outside of the vehicle before signaling the driver to begin moving
- Immediately signal the driver to stop if any person or object enters the vehicle's intended path
- Signal the driver to stop if the guide must change positions; the guide should then reposition and when ready signal the driver to continue
- Use distinct and deliberate body movements
• Be aware of blind spots

No one should cross or step behind a vehicle when the backup warning device is activated.

12.2.3 SIGNALS

When it’s necessary to move a vehicle, it is important that everyone understands exactly what’s being done. This will ensure the safety of everyone involved in the operation. There should be no confusion about the hand signals to be used.

Make sure workers involved understand who is directing the move and the procedures to be followed. Review all the hazards associated with this particular move and the precautions taken to minimize or eliminate them.

It is also very important to designate one guide so there is no confusion in the signaling procedures.

The following represent seven (7) basic signals to assist in vehicle repositioning.

**Purpose and Action Descriptions**

The driver and the guide share responsibility for safe vehicle movement during repositioning.

The guide takes a leadership role during repositioning
**PROCEED SLOWLY**

**FORWARD**

Always face palms in direction of desired travel.

**BACKWARD**

Then bend both arms repeatedly toward head and chest, and then extend.

**TURNS**

Point one arm to indicate the direction to turn.

Bend monitoring arm repeatedly toward head to indicate continued turning.
DISTANCE TO STOPPING POINT

Face palms forward, with hands above head. Bring elbows forward and hands together.

STOP

Cross both arms above head.
EMERGENCY STOP
Start with hands clasped over head.
Extend downward repeatedly until vehicle stops.

CLEAR TO LEAVE AREA
Point at the driver, and gain eye contact.
Turn and extend arms in desired direction.
12.2.4 OTHER SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS
- Consider the suitability of providing back-up warning devices for vehicles
- Minimize foot traffic
- If you must have workers and vehicles working in the same area, consider establishing a traffic control system.

12.2.5 REMEMBER
- Wear high visibility clothing
- Be visible to the driver
- Maintain eye contact with driver.
- Protect yourself, be aware of crush points
- Driver: If you loose sight of the Guide – STOP.

12.2.6 DRIVER IF NO GUIDE IS AVAILABLE
- Check the intended path of the vehicle
- Back immediately - DO NOT trust the scene to remain as checked
- Sound your horn before starting to move
- Back slowly
- Place a marker a safe distance behind, then back to it
- As you back, check both side mirrors
- Avoid blind side backing
- Don't back further than necessary.

12.3 REAFFIRMATION

It is recommended that this document be reviewed in 2011.

It is appropriate that subsequent reviews should be conducted every five years or more frequently as recommended by the review committee.