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## Lighting on Fork Lift Trucks

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### Fact sheet: Lighting requirements - fork lift trucks

**April 2007**

#### **Statement**

The requirements concerning the lighting of all vehicles used on the public road are contained in The Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989 (RVLR), as amended\*. If the vehicle is not used on the public road then the provisions of RVLR do not apply.

The information in this leaflet is provided by way of advice. Only the courts can provide an authoritative interpretation of regulations. It is the responsibility of the vehicle owner/driver to ensure that the vehicle at all times, when used on the public roads, complies with the appropriate legislation.

#### **1. General Requirements**

Fork lift trucks are not specifically mentioned in RVLR, but by virtue of their function and use they are usually considered to fall within the general definition of a "works truck", which is:

“a motor vehicle (other than a straddle carrier) designed for use in private premises and used on a road only in delivering goods from or to such premises, to or from a vehicle on a road in the immediate neighbourhood or in passing from one part of any premises to another or to other private premises in the immediate neighbourhood, or in connection with road works while at or in the immediate neighbourhood of the site of such works.”

If a fork lift truck is only used on the public road between sunrise and sunset and is not fitted with any front or rear position lamp then under Regulation 4(3) of RVLR the vehicle is exempt from having to be fitted with any lamp or reflector.

Many fork lift trucks would not be able to take advantage of this exemption without their use on the road being curtailed, especially during the winter months.

Regulation 18 of RVLR requires vehicles to be fitted with lamps, reflectors, rear markings and devices, as specified in Schedule 1 of these regulations. Table 1 of this schedule lists the types of lamp with which motor vehicles with three or more wheels are required to be fitted, and specifies the exceptions to the requirement for each lamp type. These exceptions typically refer to the vehicle type, maximum speed and

“first used” date, but sometimes refers to the weight or dimensions of the vehicle.

Assuming a fork lift truck was first used on or after 1st April 1986 and is not a particularly long or heavy vehicle, then the determining factor for the types of lamp that the vehicle is required to be fitted with is the maximum speed of the vehicle. The maximum speed is:

“the speed which a vehicle is incapable, by reason of its construction, of exceeding on the level under its own power when fully laden.”

The table below lists the types of lamp that a fork lift truck is required to be fitted with, according to its maximum speed.

Maximum speed	Types of lamp required to be fitted
Any speed	Front position lamp Rear position lamp Rear retro-reflector
>15 mph	As above, and also Dipped-beam headlamp Direction indicator Hazard warning signal device
>25 mph	All of the above, and also Main-beam headlamp Rear fog lamp Stop lamp
>40 mph	All of the above, and also Dim-dip device or running lamp (unless the vehicle conforms to European requirements)

As regards the number and positioning of each lamp type, these requirements are specified in RVL.R.

## 2. Warning beacons

A fork lift truck having a speed not exceeding 25 mph or any trailer drawn by such a vehicle is permitted to be fitted with an amber warning beacon. (RVL.R, Reg. 11(2)(l)(iv))

However, if the vehicle is used on an unrestricted dual-carriageway, other than crossing it by the quickest manner practicable, then the fitment of an amber warning beacon is obligatory and it must be kept lit when the vehicle is used on such a road. (RVL.R, Reg. 17 & 26)

Any amber warning beacon fitted, whether voluntarily fitted or required by regulation, must be fitted in compliance with the requirements of Schedule 16 of RVL.R. Schedule 16 requires the centre of the lamp to be not less than 1200 mm above the ground, and the light to be visible from at least one beacon (but not necessarily the same beacon) from any point at a reasonable distance from the vehicle (i.e. through 360°).

### **3. Further Information**

For further information on the lighting requirements for fork lift trucks or any other road vehicle can be found in The Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989. If further advice is required regarding the Regulations covered by this fact sheet, please contact the DfT at the address below:

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Department for Transport  
Zone 2/04  
Great Minster House  
76 Marsham Street  
London  
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Email: [TTS.enquiries@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:TTS.enquiries@dft.gsi.gov.uk)

\* These Regulations are published as Statutory Instruments (SIs) and can be obtained from The Stationery Office or the internet:

The Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989: SI 1989 No.1796

Amended by:

The Road Vehicles Lighting (Amendment) Regulations 1994 : SI 1994 No.2280

The Road Vehicles Lighting (Amendment) Regulations 1996 : SI 1996 No.3016

The Road Vehicles Lighting (Amendment) Regulations 2001 : SI 2001 No.560