

## **Guidance on the Uncoupling and ReCoupling Exercise**

The examiner will explain what s/he wants you to do once you have completed the reversing exercise.

S/he will ask you to drive straight forward and stop before you reach the end of the maneuvering area.

S/he will then ask you to uncouple the vehicle from the trailer, drive the towing vehicle forward, then park it alongside the trailer on the right hand side (left hand side if conditions dictate). Once you have completed the separation you will be instructed to return to the examiner for further instructions.

After uncoupling, you will be asked to re-couple the trailer assuming it is a different one to the one you uncoupled and make it safe for the road. Once again when you have finished you should return to the examiner.

The examiner will confirm that you are satisfied that the vehicle is coupled correctly and safe for the road.

## **Assessment**

### **Uncoupling/Re-Coupling Procedures for Vehicle and Trailer Combinations**

The following sets out the basic uncoupling and re-coupling procedures that candidates will be expected to follow during the test.

#### **Uncoupling**

- Select a suitable location.
- Apply the parking brake on the drawing vehicle and stop the engine.
- Apply the trailer parking brake.
- Lower the trailer landing gear and stow the winding handle.
- Turn off the air taps (if fitted).
- Disconnect the air lines/electrical leads/hydraulic hoses (where applicable) and stow them in the appropriate places.
- Uncouple the drawing vehicle and trailer.
- Drive the vehicle slowly forward.
- Remove the trailer number plate.

#### **Re-coupling**

- Check that the trailer parking brake is applied. Check the relative heights and alignment of the vehicle and trailer couplings and adjust as necessary.
- Reverse the drawing vehicle onto the trailer.
- Check that the vehicle and trailer are securely coupled.
- Apply the parking brake on the drawing vehicle and stop the engine.
- Reconnect the air lines/electrical connections /hydraulic hose (as appropriate).
- Turn on air taps (where fitted).
- Refit king - pin locking mechanism safety clip or breakaway chain.
- Retract the landing gear and stow the handle.
- Release the trailer parking brake.
- Test the trailer lights.
- Fit the trailer number plate.

**This exercise will be assessed in the following way:**

**U** = Uncoupling procedure                      **R** = Re-coupling procedure

**Driving Faults**

- U**      Not applying trailer parking brake.
- U**      Not turning off the air taps before removing the air lines.
- U**      Not releasing the trailer coupling (serious fault if separation is attempted).
- U**      Failure to stop the engine during the exercise (ETA).

**Serious Faults**

- U**      Not applying the hand brake before alighting from the drawing vehicle
- U**      Not applying the trailer parking brake throughout the procedure (ETA).
- U**      Not lowering the landing legs throughout the procedure (ETA).
- U**      Not disconnecting the air lines, electrical connections and hydraulic hose prior to separation (as applicable) (ETA).
- U**      Not stowing the air lines, electrical connections and hydraulic hose safely (out of the way of moving parts).
- U**      Attempting to drive forward without releasing king pin lock (ETA).
- R**      Lack of control when reversing.
- R**      No attempt to pull forward to check if the coupling is secure.
- R**      Not replacing the air lines, electrical connections or hydraulic hose (if applicable).
- R**      Not fitting the king-pin locking mechanism safety clip or breakaway chain throughout the procedure (ETA).
- R**      Not turning on the taps (if fitted) (ETA).
- R**      Not lifting/raising fully landing gear (ETA).
- R**      Not stowing the handle (ETA).
- R**      Not releasing the trailer parking brake (ETA).
- R**      Not releasing overrun mechanism.