

Does a Thorough Examination cover the requirements of both LOLER and PUWER?

Which is better, a Thorough Examination of the lifting parts only, or a combined Thorough Examination and Safety Inspection of the whole machine?

Law

In most cases lifting equipment (including fork lift trucks) is work equipment, so legislation in the form of **The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998** (PUWER) applies. PUWER requires the inspection and maintenance of safety-related items, such as brakes, steering and tyres.

Moreover **The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998** (LOLER) places duties on individuals and companies who own, operate or have control over (duty holders) lifting equipment, including fork lift trucks. LOLER requires that all lifting equipment (including fork lift trucks) is fit for purpose, appropriate for the task, suitably marked and in many cases, subject to statutory periodic 'thorough examination'.

Inspection under PUWER

PUWER requires all work equipment that is exposed to conditions causing deterioration liable to result in dangerous situations, is inspected at suitable intervals. To ensure that its integrity is maintained and any deterioration detected and remedied in good time.

As a general rule, a PUWER 'inspection' should be carried out:

"Where work equipment is of a type where the safe operation is critically dependent on its condition in use and deterioration would lead to a significant risk to the operator or other workers."

Inspection will identify whether work equipment can be operated, adjusted and maintained safely. Risk assessment will determine the need for inspection and how often it needs to be carried out. The inspection company or specifically designated employee tasked with this, should have a detailed record of what needs to be inspected.

Thorough examination under LOLER

Inspection and thorough examination are not the same, although a competent person may suggest combining them, if appropriate.

A thorough examination is a systematic and detailed examination of equipment and safety-critical parts, to detect any defects that are or might become dangerous, carried out at specified intervals, conducted by a competent person, who must then complete a written report.

The competent person will determine the scope of the thorough examination and they may use several sources to help them do this, such as industry guidance. The Health and Safety Executive's Contract Research Report - Thorough examination and inspection of particular items of lifting equipment (**CRR429/200**) may also be a useful reference tool.

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Combined examination and inspection under LOLER and PUWER

The British Industrial Truck Association (BITA) has formulated a guidance note (GN28) on safety inspection of fork lift trucks. GN28 provides advice on good practice in thorough examination.

BITA defines “safety inspection” as combined thorough examination, as required by LOLER and PUWER. GN28 is available to purchase from the BITA website [here](#).

National accreditation scheme for combined examination and inspection under LOLER and PUWER

Some inspection companies and examiners, i.e. those accredited to Consolidated Fork Truck Services (CFTS) will combine the thorough examination requirements under LOLER and the inspections under PUWER and perform a joint thorough examination and safety inspection, which ensures that the whole fork lift truck has been checked.

Consolidated Fork Truck Services (CFTS)

To provide clarity, the industry's major trade associations, BITA and the FLTA worked together, in close consultation with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to give clear, definitive procedures and consistent, high national standards for the thorough examination of fork lift trucks. The result is CFTS, which is the only national accreditation scheme to combine the thorough examination requirements under LOLER and the inspections under PUWER into a single fully documented activity.

How do I find CFTS accredited examiners?

An up-to-date register of accredited companies, that are currently delivering the CFTS national scheme of a joint thorough examination and safety inspection is available on the CFTS website [here](#). To help find the most appropriate examiner, the register is broken down into national and local providers by region.

Can my insurance company insist that its own inspectors carry out the Thorough Examinations on my trucks?

No. Insurance companies have no legal right to insist that their own inspectors carry out your thorough examinations. You are perfectly at liberty to make your own arrangements.

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UKMHA further guidance

UKMHA Facts Sheet 3 and 17 contain further guidance regarding thorough examination.

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The information in this Fact Sheet has been assembled and interpreted to give truck owners and users basic guidance on frequently asked questions. Further important information will be given in the quoted reference documents. Responsibility for meeting the safety obligations discussed rests with the employer, and the UKMHA will not accept liability for any problem arising as a result of the content of this document. Technical Bulletins, containing more detailed information and updated as appropriate, are made available free to members of the [UKMHA SAFE USER GROUP](#).

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