

VEHICLE TO TRAILER COUPLING

APPLICATION

This examination applies to all articulated buses and to all buses fitted with a trailer coupling.

PROCEDURE AND STANDARDS

The inspection is limited to those parts which can be seen without dismantling or uncoupling. There is no requirement to lift trapdoors or remove floor sections for this inspection. Visible signs of abnormal movement adjacent to the turntable should be taken as evidence of excessive wear in an operating member.

Pleats of bellows should be spread using hand pressure for inspection.

There is no requirement to remove retaining fixings. Buses fitted with a trailer coupling If the vehicle has a coupled trailer it must not be uncoupled.

Wear should be considered excessive if a drawing hitch, bar, hook, eye, ball or ball socket has the metal reduced to 3/4 of its original thickness.

DRAWING COUPLING

Where visible examine the drawing vehicle coupling jaws/pin/hook/eye/ball. Note the condition of these components and ensure that they are free from distortion and/or fracture.

- Check the hook/ball or pin/bushes for wear.
- Check the body of the coupling for wear, distortion or cracks.

Examine the cross member to which the coupling is mounted paying particular attention to the inner face of the cross member for security and cracks.

- Note that the coupling assembly is securely attached to the vehicle.
- Check that locking or safety devices are in position and working correct
- Check any rubber components for deterioration (e.g., wear/cracks or swellings)

ARTICULATED BUSES

Examine the coupling and operating members for condition and security. The examination is limited to those parts which can be seen without dismantling or uncoupling. However the presenter must part the bellows and lift trap doors and the turntable floor as far as is necessary to gain sight of the coupling. Ensure that these are replaced before the vehicle leaves the test centre.

Examine the condition and security of the turntable floor and of the concertina bellows and the presence and condition of sheathing on safety chains.

Examine locking or safety devices and warning lamps intended to automatically limit the angle of articulation on articulated buses. It will probably be necessary to reverse the vehicle on an area outside the test lane to check that these devices are working correctly.

REASONS FOR FAILURE

Deficiency Category

ARTICULATED BUSES

1. Coupling articulating bracket, operating member or safety device:
 - a. Insecure MAJOR
 - b. Insecure to such an extent that detachment is likely DANGROUS
 - c. Excessively worn MAJOR
 - d. Excessively worn with obvious risk of detachment DANGEROUS
 - e. Defective MAJOR
 - f. Load bearing member cracked or fractured DANGEROUS
2. Bellows:

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------|
| a. | Insecure | MAJOR |
| b. | Insecure to such an extent that detachment is likely | DANGEROUS |
| c. | So damaged or deteriorated that injury to passengers is likely | DANGEROUS |
| d. | With safety chains sheathing so damaged or deteriorated that injury to passengers is likely. | DANGEROUS |

3. Turntable floor:

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|----|--|-----------|
| a. | Insecure | MAJOR |
| b. | Insecure to such an extent that detachment is likely | DANGEROUS |
| c. | Covering in such a condition that it could cause slipping or tripping. | MAJOR |

Buses fitted with a trailer coupling

4. A drawing hitch, bar, hook, eye, ball or ball socket:

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------|
| a. | excessively worn. | MAJOR |
| b. | excessively worn with obvious risk of detachment. | DANGEROUS |
| c. | seriously deformed or modified impairing its effectiveness and or weakens the component.
(no trailer attached). | MAJOR |
| d. | seriously deformed or modified impairing its effectiveness and or weakens the component.
(trailer attached). | DANGEROUS |
| e. | cracked or fractured (no trailer attached). | MAJOR |
| f. | cracked or fractured (trailer attached). | DANGEROUS |
| g. | insecure. | MAJOR |

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| h. is insecure to such an extent that detachment is likely. | DANGEROUS |
| i. has a missing, damaged, inoperative and or inadequate safety or locking device or any coupling indicator inoperative. | MAJOR |
| 5 | |
| a. Any mechanical coupling or towing device with an unsafe modification to it secondary parts. | MAJOR |
| b. Any mechanical coupling or towing device with an unsafe modification to it primary parts. | DANGEROUS |