Activity scope
This document relates to student participation in the towing of any trailer in association with any school curriculum activity. Students should not tow a trailer on a public road or off-site as a part of a curriculum activity. Quad bikes must not be used for towing.

Risk level - High

Special considerations
- Insurance requirements are outlined in Safe Towing.

Minimum activity-specific qualifications for supervisors
- Trailers may be towed by any person provided:
  - they can legally drive the towing vehicle
  - the towing vehicle can legally tow the trailer
  - there is insurance that covers the trailer while it is being towed
  - where appropriate, the trailer has a current and valid registration.

Minimum activity-specific equipment/facilities
- The vehicle, trailer and load must meet Department of Transport and Main Roads requirements.
- The towing vehicle must be suitable for towing the loaded trailer.
- The load must not exceed the capacity of the trailer.
- The trailer and its load must not exceed the capacity of the towing vehicle.
- The load must be restrained / secured properly to make sure that driving the vehicle is still safe.
- The load must not cover number plates, lights and reflectors.
- Requirements for towbars, couplings, braking systems and safety chains are outlined in Safe Towing.
- Use hearing protection in the proximity of noisy machinery (e.g. ride-on mowers).

Activity-specific hazards/risks and suggested control measures
- Conduct a safety check of the trailer and the towing vehicle prior to use (secure coupling, tyres, tailgate, lights, etc).
- Record the size of the load and the capacity of the trailer and towing vehicle in the comments section of your risk assessment.
- Ensure engines are turned off when coupling or uncoupling trailers – especially in enclosed areas.
- Ensure there is correct support (i.e. chocks and stands - not jacks) when wheels or other components are removed from vehicles.
- Develop a strategy in case of failure of a component of the trailer (e.g. stop vehicle immediately and seek adult assistance, report any incident such as unexpected uncoupling).
- Ensure all persons are safely located when reversing, coupling, uncoupling, securing a load and/or removing wheels or other components.
- Apply the trailer’s parking brake (if fitted) and make sure the trailer is safely chocked when uncoupled on uneven or sloped ground.
• Continually assess the threat of vehicles in the proximity of people and obstacles.

• Inspect the terrain to determine whether it is suitable for towing (i.e. not too steep, rough or with dangerous obstacles, not too wet or boggy).

• Ensure that students work in the shade as much as possible.

• Provide instructions around emergency procedures (e.g. jack-knifing trailer, unintended uncoupling of trailer, becoming bogged).

• Always couple/uncouple the trailer in a safe location (i.e. on level ground, free from obstructions).

• Always ensure the trailer balance is weighted towards the front to avoid the drawbar flipping up unexpectedly when uncoupling the trailer (check the load has not moved during transit).

• Have a minimal load in the trailer, if possible, when coupling and uncoupling the trailer.

• Maintain close supervision for inexperienced operators and ‘high’ risk situations such as reversing, coupling and uncoupling the trailer, or rough terrain.

• Undertake a risk management process in order to minimise the risk of injuries caused by manual tasks such as the lifting, pulling and pushing of loads, loading/unloading the trailer, coupling/uncoupling etc e.g.
  o lowering the tailgate
  o two-person lifting for heavy items
  o using ramps.

• Provide instruction, training and supervision with the all load-moving activities, to avoid excessive lifting.

• Do not allow students to ride in moving trailers except in specific situations, such as fruit picking or hay making where purpose-built trailers are used at very slow speeds.

• Comply with Department of Transport and Main Roads safe towing practices.

• Comply with relevant Workplace Health and Safety Queensland codes of practice e.g. Hazardous manual tasks, Rural plant.

Useful activity-specific links

• Loads and towing

• Safe Towing – All about safe towing

• Workplace Health and Safety Queensland codes of practice

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