

Fork Lift Truck Site Surveys

The purpose of a site survey for fork lift truck operations is to ensure, as far as possible, that the trucks to be used are safe, effective and efficient. The principle is the same whether the trucks are to be purchased or hired.

The complexity of the survey will depend on the complexity of the operation to be supported. A site involving indoor and outdoor operations, with high racking, block stacking and loose cargos, with a hundred or so trucks of eight different types is very different to one where a single truck is needed to support part of a manufacturing process.

All members of the FLTA should be able to carry out a site survey. However, users must satisfy themselves that the chosen company has the appropriate level of experience and resources to adequately assess the tasks to be performed. If in doubt, the user should ask to see an example of a survey for a similar operation.

There is likely to be a charge for this service. Any fees involved should be agreed in advance.

A survey will be appropriate to the time that it took place. If physical aspects of the site change, or operational activity is modified, then the survey will need to be revisited. The mix of trucks recommended may well need to change.

There is no set format for a site survey. However, many of the items listed below may need to be considered.

Type of Operation

- Manufacture/warehouse/cold store/other
- Indoor/outdoor/both
- Heated/unheated
- Temperature of cold store
- Critical applications
- Unusual applications/features
- Maximum load (kg)
- Intensity of operation
 - Number of shifts
 - Days of operation

Load Details

- Type of loads
- Use of pallets/stillages/cages etc and sizes
- Depth – away from forks
- Width – across forks
- Height – including pallet
- Weight
- Load centres
- Pallet overhang
- Any live loads – full details
- Hazardous loads – full details

- Handling issues – full details
- Internal height of containers
- Trailer bed heights

Racking

- Are drawings/specifications available
- Type of installation
- Age of installation
- Working measurements:
 - Top of top beam
 - Depth of frame
 - Height of first beam – underside
 - Beam length
 - Beam width
 - Pallet entry
 - Pallet/load overhang
 - Aisle width (pallet to pallet) (load to load)
 - Intersection aisle width
- Use of tunnels
- Tunnel dimensions
- Working headroom
- Lowest overhead obstruction
- List overhead obstructions in aisles or elsewhere
- Drive-in
- Double deep
- Guidance system
- Regular internal inspections?
- Annual external inspections?

Internal Areas

- Height to eaves
- Height to middle
- Length
- Awkward areas (list all)
- Obstructions (list all)
- Mezzanine floor height
- Height under mezzanine
- Doorways (consider all)
 - Type – shutter/sliding/rubber swing/curtain
 - Height
 - Width
 - Floor channel
 - Restrictions
- Type of floor
- Condition – old/new
- Floor joints
- Ramps/gradients
 - %
 - Length
 - Height

- Edge barriers/markings
- Obstructions
- Blind spots
- Dust/dirt
- Surface water (near doors/other)
- Loading bay description
- Electrical supply (single/three phase)
- Charging areas

Outside Areas

- Surface type and condition
- Potholes
- Drainage
- Ramps/gradients
 - %
 - Length
 - Height
 - Edge barriers/markings
- Obstructions
- Loading bay description
- Fuel points – diesel/LPG/other

Other Considerations/Options

- Need for:
 - Attachments
 - Sideshifts
 - Fork extensions
 - Weather protection (hard/soft cab)
 - Flashing beacons
 - Reverse alarms – type/issues
 - Proximity alarms
 - Lights
 - Mirrors
 - Cameras
 - Tyre specification
 - Special mast type
 - Additional hydraulics
 - Special controls
 - Key control
 - Data logger – maintenance/utilisation etc.
 - Other - specify
- Are operators trained? (Proof required)
- Location of suitable maintenance area
 - Facilities
- Engineers access to
 - Phones
 - Toilets/washing facilities
 - Canteen