



# Unite the Union National Car Council



## Electric Vehicles (EV's)

The dramatic increase in electric vehicles has far outreached the knowledge of their safe transportation and storage. Although the risks of a catastrophic failure of the battery in a vehicle is extremely low the impact of such a failure is extremely dangerous and poses a real threat to life if safe systems are not in place. As such, Unite the Union's National Car Council has developed the following guidance as a first step in producing comprehensive safe systems of work for the car delivery industry.

This is very much a starting point and we are continuing to work within the industry to ensure all of our members and all road users are safe.

### **Risk of explosion/fire/toxic chemicals.**

Although the risk is extremely low we must be aware of the potential hazards and the appropriate course of action in the event of a catastrophic failure of the EV battery pack.

### **In regards to the storage, inspection and transportation of EV's the following safety measures should be considered;**

- Any damage to the floor of the vehicle, however small, could lead to the battery pack failing. Any damage through loading, unloading or RTC should be reported immediately and the vehicle isolated until confirmed safe by an appropriately trained inspector and after 24 hours.
- Any signs of smoke or steam from the vehicle is more likely to be a highly toxic and volatile vapour cloud with the potential to poison and explode.
- Suspected fire or potential fire must not be tackled, but if possible and it is safe to do so, the vehicle should be removed to an isolated area, away from buildings, people and other vehicles. (fire extinguishers are of no use)
- Emergency services must be called and, if at a site, a responsible person informed.
- EV's should not be winched or towed.
- Due to the high voltages present in the vehicles, EV's should not be jump started unless full, comprehensive and recognised training has been undertaken.

**Consideration should be given to the following recommendations;**

- Appropriate risk assessments should be carried out in conjunction with Unite the Union Health & Safety reps followed by Safe Systems of Work.
- Safety training should be disseminated to all employees engaged in the storage, inspection and transportation of EV's.
- There should be regular and ongoing training to ensure that guidance remains current and relevant.
- Employees must feel able to report any and all incidents without fear of reprisals.
- Carriers should engage with Unite the Union and manufacturers and any other interested parties to ensure up to date guidance and processes.
- Signage identifying that the transporter is carrying EV's could be considered to assist emergency services in dealing with any RTC.

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