

# PHYSICAL DEMANDS ASSESSMENT

COMMERCIAL  
VEHICLE  
OPERATOR

(TRUCK DRIVER)

# PHYSICAL DEMANDS ASSESSMENT (PDA)

## COMMERCIAL VEHICLE OPERATOR (TRUCK DRIVER)

As a national organization mandated to identify and support HR needs for Canada's trucking and transportation sector, Trucking HR Canada (THRC) plays a pivotal role in designing and completing projects that directly address HR challenges to support a vibrant and thriving trucking workforce. A key concern is the attraction, recruitment and retention of skilled workers to keep the wheels of the industry turning.

### What is the Issue?

Diversity and inclusion lead to strong, skilled workplaces; however, many industries - including the trucking sector - experience difficulties and barriers in engaging and retaining individuals that require accommodations to perform their jobs to their full potential.

### How Can Physical Demands Assessments Help Employers?

Physical Demands Assessments are an invaluable HR tool for employers to ensure diverse workplaces in which all workers can effectively perform essential and valuable work.

PDAs help to identify the physical requirements of a position that can then serve as the basis for implementing accommodations to allow workers to perform their jobs effectively and efficiently.

### What are Physical Demands Assessments?

**Physical Demands Assessments (PDAs)** identify the physical job requirements for specific occupations. Once employers are aware of the physical requirements of the job, current employees and new hires can be assessed to determine if they can perform the physical duties. If required, potential accommodations can be put in place to allow workers from various under-represented groups to not only perform, but thrive, in their roles - a mutually beneficial outcome for both workers and employers.

## When are Physical Demands Assessments Useful for Employers?

Employers can use Physical Demands Assessments when working with the following diverse groups in the workplace:

- Workers with different physical body strength capabilities than their coworkers in the same role.
- Workers who may not have the same strength, balance, stamina or coordination as their co-workers.
- Employees who are returning to work after experiencing an injury that causes temporary impairment of physical ability or functioning.
- Employees or new hires who have permanent medical restrictions or disabilities that alter the way they perform certain physical tasks.

Physical Demands Assessments are useful for EVERY employee. PDAs promote the consideration of inclusive practices that help all workers to perform their jobs as effectively, safely and comfortably as possible.



## PDA OVERVIEW

### Job Description: Commercial Vehicle Operator

This occupation includes drivers who operate a straight truck or tractor-trailer with a Gross Vehicle Weight of up to 45,000 kg (100,000 lb.). They transport freight contained within a cargo-van-style trailer. These drivers handle general freight, Less-than-Truckload (LTL) or loose freight, tailgate deliveries, intercity Pickups and Deliveries (P&D), inner-city travel, and potentially heat (non-refrigerated) loads. They operate on urban, regional and national roads – in any terrain except mountain passes.

Not included in this assessment are specialized skills required for:

- Aggregate or dump operation
- Bin, lugger, or roll-on/roll-off
- Car carrier
- Cargo or dry bulk tank operation
- Crane or auxiliary vehicle (e.g. moffet, hitchhiker)
- Dangerous goods (as defined by the need for TDG certificate)
- Owner-operator, leased operator
- Refrigerated goods
- Train, double
- International border crossing
- Livestock
- Long Combination Vehicle (LCV)
- Mountain operation
- On/off road operation (e.g. logging, petroleum)
- Overweight or over-dimensional load
- Ferry crossing
- Flat deck operation
- Inter modal container

### Most physical aspects of the job:

The most commonly performed actions requiring physical **STRENGTH** include:

#### **OCCASIONALLY Performed Actions:**

- Pushing and Pulling
  - Unilaterally (one side of the body)
  - Bilaterally (both sides of the body)

#### **Physical strength requirements** (maximum and usual):

- Lifting and Lowering:
  - Maximum 24 kg (53 lb.); Usual up to 4.5 kg (10 lb.);
- Carrying
  - Weight – Maximum 24 kg (53 lb.); Usual 4.5 kg (10 lb.)
  - Distance – Maximum 6 meters (20 ft.); Usual 1.5 meters (5 ft.)
- Pushing/Pulling:
  - Up/Down (two-handed) – Maximum 40 kgf (80 lbf); Usual 19.8 kgf (43.6 lbf)
  - Unilateral (one-handed) – Maximum 13.6 kgf (30 lbf); usual 5-13.6 kgf (11-30 lbf)
  - Bilateral (two-handed) – Maximum 40 kgf (80 lbf); usual 6.8-10 kgf (15-22 lbf)

The most commonly performed actions requiring **MOBILITY AND PHYSICAL POSITIONING** include:

<p><b>FREQUENTLY Performed Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sitting</li> <li>• Gripping</li> <li>• Foot Action</li> </ul>	<p><b>OCCASIONALLY Performed Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking</li> <li>• Climbing (ladders)</li> <li>• Crouching/Squatting</li> <li>• Neck Movements</li> <li>• Reaching (Horizontal/Forward/Vertical)</li> <li>• Elbow Movements</li> <li>• Wrist Movements</li> <li>• Pinching</li> </ul>
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**Legend:**

	<b>% of Shift</b>	<b>4hr Shift</b>	<b>8hr Shift</b>	<b>12hr Shift</b>
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RARE	0-5%	1-12 min	1-24 min	1 - 36 min
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**ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:**

Essential job functions are the fundamental duties required of Commercial Vehicle Operators. In other words, they are the duties that the incumbent **absolutely must be able to do** to perform the job.

The Essential Job Functions of the Commercial Vehicle Operator are:

- Driving
- Inspecting truck and trailer

Commercial Vehicle Operators spend upwards of 75% of their day driving and upwards of 10% of their day conducting vehicle inspections.

## ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL JOB REQUIREMENTS

To be a Commercial Vehicle Operator, job incumbents must meet the basic medical and vision standards to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL) in their province/territory. If these standards are not met, accommodations cannot be made. Medical and vision standards vary by jurisdiction; however, standards may include:

### Vision Standards:

- a visual acuity that is not poorer than:
  - 20/30 with both eyes open and examined together
  - 20/100 in the weaker eye, with or without corrective lenses
- a horizontal visual field with both eyes open and examined together of at least:
  - 150 continuous degrees along the horizontal meridian
  - 20 continuous degrees above and below fixation

### Hearing Standards:

Drivers whose hearing in one ear is better than in the other:

- must be able to perceive in the better ear a forced whisper at a distance of 1.5 metres, with or without a hearing aid

**OR**

- must not have a loss in the better ear of more than 40 decibels at 500, 1000 and 2000 hertz (if an audiometer is used to test the driver's hearing)

## POTENTIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Please note that the accommodations referenced are high-level suggestions for employers. However, any individual requiring accommodations to perform their job tasks should be assessed by an accredited and/or certified professional (e.g. Registered Kinesiologist, Ergonomist, Physio/Occupational Therapist) to develop an accommodation plan that is right for the individual.

Potential accommodations for actions requiring physical **STRENGTH**:

- **Pushing and pulling** – use of assistive pulleys, levers or tools (situation specific)

Potential accommodations for actions requiring **MOBILITY AND PHYSICAL POSITIONING**:

- **Sitting** – ergonomically-fitted air-ride seat
- **Gripping** – steering wheel grips, adaptors or knobs
- **Foot Action** – hand controls for accelerator and/or brakes (if automatic transmission)
- **Elbow/Wrist movements** – supportive braces
- **Reaching** – supportive hooks, bars or grabbing tools

#### Universal Inclusive Practices and Accommodations:

- Ensuring a low-scent or scent-free environment (e.g. in vehicles, loading/unloading areas and offices)
- Providing frequent breaks to allow workers experiencing non-visible disabilities to conserve energy (e.g. workers experiencing chronic fatigue, chronic pain, needing to take medication, needing to eat at specific times, needing to take more frequent bathroom breaks)
- Using electronic devices (e.g. tablet computers or smartphones with touchscreens) to complete administrative tasks requiring fine finger movements or wrist movement
- Providing ergonomic chairs during periods of sitting or when at rest during breaks
- Providing ice packs or heating pads (in-cab or in-office) to assist in pain management
- Stretching during breaks
- Wearing orthotic footwear
- Outfitting computer monitors with screen protection to prevent glare and prevent headaches
- Ensuring all step ladders, step stools and ladders are equipped with grips to ensure stability and prevent slips and falls, as well as grab grips and vision reflection strips.
- Providing headsets for desk jobs that require wrist movement or neck and neck movement
- Utilizing grip holders for use of devices – such as phones or clipboards – that require an open grip
- Using ear plugs to block out excess noise but maintain hearing ability to assist workers with noise sensitivity, post-concussion or auditory processing issues
- Using sunglasses or darkened lenses to manage light sensitivity issues

# PHYSICAL DEMANDS PROFILE

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Commercial Vehicle Operator</b>	<b>NOC</b>	<b>7511.1 - Long Haul Truck Drivers</b>
<b>Report Completed By</b>	CBI Workplace Solutions		

## JOB OBJECTIVE:

The commercial vehicle operator is responsible for safe operation of a commercial vehicle and its features while delivering cargo from origin to destination. This includes maintaining the operating condition of both truck and trailer and may include handling of skids and products on trailer.

## KEY JOB TASKS

### 1. Perform pre-trip/post-trip inspection on truck/tractor and on trailer

- a. Visual inspection of lights, mirrors, stacks, air dams, fuel tanks, and caps, emergency equipment and exterior of truck (frame for cracks, broken or unauthorized welds, holes or other damages), pump transfer motor, liquid cargo meters, piping and valves.
- b. Visual inspection of engine, belts, hoses, fluid levels, steering shaft, and hoses while engine is both cold and hot.
- c. Inspection of tires, wheels, steering play and brakes (test operation of air brakes).
- d. Inspect deck, 5th wheel jaw, and power hook-ups.
- e. Check operation of clutch, shifter, horn, CB radio, mirrors, and gauges.
- f. Read previous day's inspection forms and confirm that all identified problems have been corrected.
- g. Check for leaks on the ground and dripping fluids on underside of engine and transmission.
- h. Log all unsafe or out of limits conditions; schedule preventative maintenance.
- i. Ensure interior and exterior maintenance of vehicle.
- j. Prepare equipment for next load.
- k. General maintenance of accessory equipment (e.g. special heating/cooling equipment to keep the product stable).



## **2. Perform trailer inspection after every hook-up**

- a. Inspect exterior of trailer including lights.
- b. Inspect operation of reefer, including fuel level.
- c. Inspect tires, wheels, suspension valves, air bags, brakes, flaps, spare tire and chain, locks and pins on rear wheel set.
- d. Check locks on rear doors.

## **3. Execute coupling/uncoupling of the trailers**

- a. Enter and egress tractor when looking to couple an empty trailer in the yard at the start of shift.
- b. Couple/hook-up and drop of trailers.
  - i. Release/engage 5th wheel jaw, opening and closing rear doors.
  - ii. Set up trailer according to size of load and highway safety guidelines in each province or state.

## **4. Drive truck and navigate routes with use of the Global Positioning System (GPS)**

- a. Operate tractor-trailer vehicle combinations.
- b. Operate tractor bobtailing around the yard while searching for an empty trailer.
- c. Execute straight backing/docking and parking tractor trailers.
  - i. Connect/unhook airline and electrical hoses.
  - ii. Wind up landing gear.
- d. Control vehicle motion and speed.
- e. Apply steering and braking techniques in emergency situations.
- f. Perform repairs on truck as needed while on the road to safely reach a maintenance facility.
- g. Submit maintenance request.

## **5. Communicate with dispatch teams**

- a. Confirm pickup and delivery of shipments.
- b. Confirm load details with shipper and consignee.
- c. Receive bill of lading/shipping instructions.
- d. Maintain a professional working relationship with dispatcher and other drivers.

## **6. Plan work, plan trips and review documentation**

- a. Plan basic routes.
- b. Secure/obtain required documents and equipment.
- c. Obtain valid documents for registration, licensing and insurance.
- d. Verify validity of personal documents, ensure legal axle weights.
- e. Comply with on the road inspection station requirements.

## 7. Handle Cargo

- a. Load the cargo into the tank/trailer.
  - i. Connect hose line to the pipe.
  - ii. Tighten coupling with a wrench.
  - iii. Open valves.
- b. Unload cargo at destination
  - i. Gripping specialized equipment, couplings, hoses, flanges, etc.
  - ii. Once loaded secure valves and, depending on the product, may have to be sealed.
  - iii. Visually verify correct pumps, pressures, hoses, valves, fittings, couplings, etc.

## 8. Perform Administrative Duties

- a. Maintain daily log inbound/outbound deliveries, dangerous goods log (TDG), trips and fuel data.
  - i. Administer bill of lading/delivery.
  - ii. Verify document accuracy (client order#/assignment reference #).

EQUIPMENT	PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT
Tire thumper; wrenches; hammer; pliers; screwdrivers; first aid kit; locks; 5th wheel puller; GPS; fire extinguisher; CB radio; load lock; engine fluids; hand trucks at retail locations	Safety boots; safety vest; safety gloves

STRENGTH REQUIREMENTS		Frequency					Mass (KG)		Task #	Comments
		S	R	O	F	C	Max	Usual		
Lifting/Lowering	Floor to Bench (0-88 cm)	✓					24	</=4.5	1,3,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tools - tire thumper, hammer, wrenches [2.2-4.5 kg]</li> <li>Fluid containers: up to 4.5 kg, vertical travel = 109 cm</li> <li>Load lock: 24 kg, vertical travel = 101 cm</li> </ul> <p><i>Some loads may require handling cargo (hand bombing cases, moving product) - occurrence is seldom.</i></p>
	Bench to Shoulder (89-149 cm)		✓							
	Floor to Shoulder (0-149 cm)		✓							
	Above Shoulder (>150 cm)		✓							
Carrying	Weight						24	</=4.5	3,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light boxes, tools, fluids carried with one or both hands.</li> <li>Carrying load lock (24.0 kg) in localized area. 101.6 cm hand grip height on the load lock.</li> </ul> <p><i>Some loads may require handling cargo (hand bombing cases, moving product) - occurrence is seldom.</i></p> <p><i>Lift truck, hand jack, and two wheeled cart are available to minimize carrying</i></p>
	Distance (meters)						22.7	9.1		
Pushing/Pulling (Force)	Up/Down		✓				39.9	19.8	1,3,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pull to open hood [39.9 kg]. Hand height 142.4 cm-167.6 cm.</li> <li>Push down to raise pallet jack: Force = [19.8 kg].</li> </ul>
	Unilateral			✓			13.6	5.0-13.6	1,3,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open trailer swing doors: Force = 11.8 kg Hand height = 147.3 cm.</li> <li>Disengage air brakes on a control panel using pincer grip: Force = 5.0 kg, Hand horizontal distance = 18".</li> <li>Push to engage air brakes on control panel: Force = 13.6 kg, Hand distance = 48.3 cm.</li> <li>Pull to disengage parking break: Force = 5.0 kg.</li> </ul>

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STRENGTH REQUIREMENTS		Frequency					Mass (KG)		Task #	Comments
		S	R	O	F	C	Max	Usual		
Pushing/Pulling (Force)	Bilateral			✓			36.3	6.8-10.0	1,3,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pull pin to disengage 5th wheel when offloading trailer: Force = 18.1 kg, Hand height = 116.8 cm, Pin puller length = 94 cm.</li> <li>• Pull hand jack to rotate/stage pallets inside the trailer: Force = 36.3 kg.</li> <li>• Push/pull hand jack loaded with product, up to 26.8 kg initial force, 11.8 kg sustained (depending on load), Hand height = 121.9 cm.</li> <li>• Push/pull gear shifts: Force = 6.8-10 kg, Hand height = 66 cm (some trucks are automatic).</li> <li>• Push/pull to open trailer roller doors: Force = 27.2-29.5 kg, Hand height = 188 cm.</li> <li>• Push/pull to open trailer roller doors: Force = 27.2-29.5 kg, Hand height = 188 cm Pull/push to place power chock to secure trailer wheels while parked at the docks: Force = 17 kg</li> </ul>

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MOBILITY AND POSTURAL REQUIREMENTS		Frequency					Task #	Comments
		S	R	O	F	C		
Standing			✓				1,2,3,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standing is intermittent with walking when performing inspection of truck and during handling of cargo as needed.</li> <li>Opportunities to change posture are available during waiting periods throughout the shift.</li> <li>Waiting for outbound loads for 30 to 60 minutes.</li> <li>Standing, walking and sitting are under the discretion of the driver during wait times.</li> </ul>
Walking				✓			1,2,3,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking is intermittent with standing when performing truck inspection and during handling of cargo (when required).</li> </ul>
Sitting					✓		4,5,6,8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sitting is performed when operating the truck and driving between locations. Whole body vibration may be present during this time.</li> <li>However, air-ride seat with an air lumbar support is present.</li> <li>Long distance hauls can take up to 10 hours of total driving per day.</li> </ul>
Climbing	Stairs		✓				1,2,3,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers are trained to use 3-point technique to climb three steps into and out of cab of truck (43.2 cm/94.0 cm/127.0 cm), and trailer (55.9 cm/83.8 cm/114.3 cm).</li> </ul>
	Ladders			✓			1,2,3,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>43.2 cm from ground to first step onto the tractor cabin.</li> <li>94 cm from ground second step.</li> <li>127 cm from ground cabin entrance.</li> </ul>
	Other							Not Required.
Balancing								May be required in emergency situations.
Kneeling								May be required in emergency situations.
Crouching/Squatting				✓			2,3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pulling pin to disengage 5th wheel.</li> <li>Handing cases at low level (if needed).</li> </ul>

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MOBILITY AND POSTURAL REQUIREMENTS		Frequency					Task #	Comments
		S	R	O	F	C		
Crawling							May be required in emergency situations.	
Neck Movements				✓			1,2,3,4,7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dynamic neck flexion and extension required to perform multiple job processes.</li> <li>Dynamic neck rotation to monitor for safety while driving and backing.</li> </ul>	
Low Back Movements			✓				1,2,3,7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visual inspection of the trailer. 116.8 cm from ground to the bottom of the trailer.</li> <li>Usually able to crouch to work at low levels.</li> <li>Stooping required when forward reach is too great to crouch.</li> </ul>	
Reaching	Horizontal (Forward)			✓			1,2,3,4,7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average 38.1 cm reach to the steering wheel, maximum up to 48.3 cm may be required on occasion.</li> <li>Steering wheel is positioned within close reach from the seat. 41.9 cm from the chair lumbar support to the front of the wheel.</li> </ul>	
	Vertical (Up/Down)			✓			1,2,3,4,7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Driver is required to reach to multiple levels. Vertical reach heights range from 15.2 cm – 188 cm” from floor level.</li> </ul> <p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fluid storage – 109.2 cm (antifreeze, oil, windshield washer fluid).</li> </ul> <p><b>Truck/Trailer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steering wheel height 63.5 cm-94 cm”, positioned at an anterior tilt to the driver. Cabin door handle height 152.4 cm, landing gear – 88.9 cm – 139.7 cm, trailer pin – 116.8 cm, connecting cable from trailer to truck – 76.2 cm – 142.2 cm, fuel tank cap – 94 cm, hood lock – 142.2 cm, rear door latch – 147.3 cm, grab bar – 139.7 cm – 185.4 cm, storage compartment – 129.5 cm, latches/locks trailer door –149.9 cm – 167.6 cm, gear shifter – 66 cm, dash board controls – 61 cm – 81.3 cm, horn pull cord – 111.8 cm.</li> </ul> <p><b>Lift Truck</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grab bar – 144.8 cm.</li> </ul>	

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MOBILITY AND POSTURAL REQUIREMENTS	Frequency					Task #	Comments
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Extension (Behind)							Not Required.
Lateral (Side)		✓				4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Side reach required to operate lift truck (35.6 cm reach) and truck dashboard controls (55.9 cm reach).</li> </ul>
<b>Elbow movements</b>			✓			1,2,3,4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intermittent non-neutral elbow posture may be required e.g. pronation/supination to operate vehicle</li> </ul>
<b>Wrist movements</b>			✓				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intermittent non-neutral wrist postures may be required.</li> </ul>
<b>Gripping</b>				✓		1,2,3,4,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closed grip: carts, door handle, steering wheels, rear door latch, vehicle controls, belts, hoses, reservoir caps, etc.</li> <li>Open grip: cases (seldom), steering wheel, mobile device, assessor clipboard.</li> </ul>
<b>Pinching</b>			✓			7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tip/palmar pinch: belts, hoses, paperwork, pen, small controls, hood lock, oil dipstick, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Fine finger movements (e.g. keying)</b>		✓				4,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operate equipment controls, bay door, dock controls, electronic log mobile application, preparing driver assessments.</li> </ul>
<b>Striking with hand</b>		✓				2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using hammer to check air pressure in tires when demonstrating pre/post trip inspection.</li> </ul>
<b>Foot action</b>				✓		4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foot pedals while operating vehicle pedals (gas, brake, clutch with standard transmission): Force = 3.7 kg.</li> <li>Horizontal distance from pedal to the front of the seat = 48 cm.</li> <li>Load lock pedal: Force = 6.8 kg.</li> </ul>

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## ADDITIONAL CONCERNS AND DEMANDS

Environmental Conditions	✓	Hot		Adequate lighting
	✓	Cold	✓	Moving objects
	✓	Outdoor		Working at heights
	✓	Indoor		Slippery surface
		Dry		Congested area
		Humid		Sharp edges
	✓	Noise	✓	Fumes/vapours/gases
	✓	Vibration		Electromagnetic fields
		Glare		
Psychological/Mental Demands	✓	Work under pressure (deadlines)		Influence people
	✓	Fast pace work		Confrontation situations
	✓	Deal with multiple tasks		Incentive/piece work
		Perform complex and varied tasks		Irregular hours
		Attain precise standards/attention to detail		Overtime
		Control of work pace	✓	Reading
		Direct control/plan of work	✓	Working alone
		Close supervision		Working in a group
	✓	Follow instructions		Travelling
Sensory Demands	✓	Hearing	✓	Spatial perception
		Speech		Tactile
		Colour vision	✓	Smell
	✓	Near vision		Taste
	✓	Far vision		