



## **BEST PRACTICES FOR TOW TRUCK DRIVER TRAINING & PROCEDURAL MANUALS**

Training and standardized procedures are especially important in the commercial towing space. They not only ensure the success of the employee and the brand, but also lessen the likelihood of costly mistakes. If an accident happens and a claim goes into litigation, two of the first questions the driver will be asked are, “What training did you receive? What documents or procedures did you receive?” If the driver didn’t receive any training or a manual, it is a real setback.

### **Tips for Training Tow Truck Drivers**

- Consistency is key — and all training needs to be documented.
- Good news! Training does not mean insureds need to send their employees to weeklong training sessions. Rather, there should be a best practices document or brief procedural guide that outlines all the steps employees should take each time they’re doing a specific job.
- This document should be reviewed with each driver with the expectation that they should follow every step, every time.
- Insureds should make it mandatory that each driver read and sign the document.  
→ **This is the documentation we would need in court. This is huge from an auto liability perspective!**

### **Tips for Creating Procedural Manuals**

- A procedural manual does not need to be a huge laundry list or a textbook — a one-page checklist can work great!  
→ **Agents, tell your insureds to take what they know and their expectations, put it into a document and make sure employees follow it each and every time.**
- This doesn’t require over-engineering — simpler is better here. Keep it high level and topical.
- Hit the big things, like: “Put out emergency beacons.” You don’t need to say, “Put out three emergency beacons.” The devil is in the details, and plaintiff’s attorneys will latch onto that!
- A Bill of Lading should be used each and every time a tow truck driver is picking up a vehicle to document vehicle condition.
- It’s critical for employees to know to follow the manual(s) every single time they are towing a vehicle.



## Procedural Manual Template for Insureds

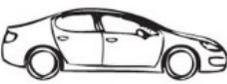
- **Click here** to download a great example of a towing procedural manual. It's not overly complicated but does delineate step-by-step expectations as well as do's and don'ts.
  - ➔ **Having a document like this signed by employees would be a huge win for insureds if they have a claim go to litigation!**

\* *Disclaimer: This is only a template to assist in setting up a procedure manual. The manual should be appropriately customized to fit the needs of the business that plans to utilize it.*

## Bill of Lading (BOL) Resources

- Insureds have a few options when it comes to BOL. No matter which option your insureds choose, consistency is key!
- **HARD COPY:** You can't go wrong with the classic, old-school option of a hard-copy form, like the example shown. Simplicity is key here!
- **DIGITAL:** Technology is now available to digitally capture BOL information. Note that there is a cost associated with these platforms, but they integrate with financials like Quicken products, which can be helpful and cost effective. Here are two tow operations software applications your insured can consider:
  - **Towbook**
  - **Traxero**
- **HYBRID:** The third option is a hybrid. The driver could snap photos of the four corners of the vehicle or clearly document pre-existing damages – and just have the owner sign off on the bill of lading.

### EXAMPLE BILL OF LADING

<b>LOGO HERE</b>	<b>Business Name</b> Business Address Atlanta, Ga 12345	<b>BILL OF LADING</b> Date _____ Truck No. _____ Driver _____
<small>Customer hereby request that the Broker make arrangements for the transport of the following described vehicle from origin to destination with carrier elected by Broker subject to the terms and conditions contained herein, including those on the back of this form, or if faxed, those terms and conditions faxed here with.</small>		
<b>Origin</b> Customer Name _____ Address _____ Phone # _____ Dealer Name _____ Address _____ Phone # _____	<b>Destination</b> Customer Name _____ Address _____ Phone # _____ Dealer Name _____ Address _____ Phone # _____	
Car <input type="checkbox"/> SUV <input type="checkbox"/> Van <input type="checkbox"/> Bill <input type="checkbox"/> C.O.D. <input type="checkbox"/>		
Year _____ Make _____ Model _____ Color _____ Mileage _____		
Plate # _____ VIN # _____		
Interior Condition _____		
Additional Info _____		
  	 	<small>           B - BENT            BB - BUFFER BURNED            BR - BROKEN            C - CUT            CR - CRACKED            D - DENTED            F - FADED            FF - FOREIGN FLUID            G - SOILED            L - LOOSE            M - MISSING            P - PITTED            PC - PAINT CHIP            R - RUBBED            RU - RUST            S - SCRATCHED            SL - SOLED            ST - STAINED            T - TORN         </small>
<small>           Driver cannot make proper inspection: Night Time Pick-up _____ Initial Rain _____ Initial No Driving Test _____ Initial            Snow _____ Initial Dirty _____ Initial Not DOT _____ Initial         </small>		
<small>           During transport vehicles and vehicle equipment may cease to operate properly through no fault of the transporter. The transporter will be responsible for damage directly caused by driver. <b>The transporter Will NOT be Responsible for damage NOT caused by the driver.</b> </small>		
<small>           I agree with the Driver assessment of the condition of this vehicle. I have read and understand the terms and conditions above and on the reverse side of this form. I agree to be bound by all the terms and conditions. This vehicle is free of contents.         </small>		
<small>           The Customer/consignee hereby acknowledges and represents that he or she has received this vehicle in the same condition as it had previously been delivered to the Transporter except as noted above, and hereby releases the Broker and Transporter from any claims for damage to the vehicle.         </small>		
Owner/Shipper Signature upon pick up _____ Date _____	Owner/Shipper Signature upon pick up _____ Date _____	
Driver's Signature _____ Date _____	Driver's Signature _____ Date _____	

# Case Studies: On-Hook Operations

On-hook claims have represented 25-35% of the total claim volume in the industry since 2020. This has equated to roughly 22% in total claims payout each year.

By setting standardized procedures around the on-hook process and diligent documentation of the customer vehicle before and after tow, we have seen some insureds drastically reduce on-hook claims submitted under their policy.

## EXAMPLE 1:

- The claimant submitted a claim for damages that were allegedly sustained to their disabled vehicle during a tow. The claimant was alleging almost \$4,000 in property damage that occurred when the vehicle was being dropped at the final location. The estimate included damage to bumper, left fender and grille. This claim was also reported 45 days after the job occurred.
- Through the investigation, we were able to obtain photos of the vehicle before loading and after unloading that had the corresponding date stamps of the date of the pick up. The photos reflected the vehicle had no damage at time of pick up and also was undamaged at time of the drop.
- Denial of liability was issued accordingly, and **zero dollars were paid out on that claim.**

## EXAMPLE 2:

- An insured submitted a claim acknowledging that they had done minor damage to the front bumper of the claimant vehicle during the drop of the disabled vehicle. The claimant submitted an estimate of damage for almost \$6,000 that included damage to the oil pan, skid plate, right fender, radiator and rim.
- The insured provided photos of vehicle during the pick up and drop off, as well as a bill of lading that reflected pre-existing damage to the claimant vehicle not associated with the very minor damage that the insured memorialized with photos they secured during the tow process.
- By providing this documentation, we were able to deny the pre-existing damages that were not the fault of the insured, and the **payout of this claim was \$576 versus over \$6,000.**



**As a benefit of partnering with KBK Insurance Group, Wayne is available as a resource to help agents and their insureds at any time!** Wayne can assist in many ways, from reviewing manuals to visiting a site to discuss loss mitigation.

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