

Learner supplement

Practical reference guides for the six-topic Executive Chain of Responsibility course.

Use these guides to map your influence, question controls and follow issues through to a verified result. Read them alongside the topic content and the current requirements that apply to your operation.

Your course sequence

1. Understanding Chain of Responsibility 1
2. Understanding Chain of Responsibility 2
3. Understanding Chain of Responsibility 3
4. Employer — Safe transport systems
5. Executive — Accountability and liability
6. Executive Due Diligence — Evidence and action

Start with one risk.

Name the control owner, choose the evidence you will examine and set a date to check whether the control is working.

Reading reviewed 6 October 2026. National-law reference: Heavy Vehicle National Law (Queensland), current as at 1 August 2026. Check the local application law and other relevant requirements for the jurisdiction and task.

CoR reference — Functions, duties and executive accountability

Use this guide to identify the duties relevant to the work. Start with the function and the entity, then examine the individual's actual role.

The ten chain functions

Function	Starting point for your review
Employer	Employs a heavy vehicle driver.
Prime contractor	Engages a self-employed driver under a contract for services.
Operator	Directs the control and use of a heavy vehicle.
Scheduler	Schedules transport or a driver's work and rest.
Consignor	Arranges for goods to be sent; check the full statutory definition and arrangements.
Consignee	Intended recipient of the goods under the statutory definition; check applicable exceptions.
Packer	Packs or assembles goods for transport under the statutory definition.
Loading manager	Manages, or supervises activities at, premises averaging five or more heavy vehicles loaded or unloaded daily; check the full definition.
Loader	Loads a heavy vehicle, including the activities covered by the statutory definition.
Unloader	Unloads a heavy vehicle, including the activities covered by the statutory definition.

These are practical prompts, not replacements for the full definitions in section 5. A person or business can perform several functions. Driving or owning a vehicle alone is not the test for party status.

Keep the duties distinct

Duty or liability route	What to examine
Party's primary duty — section 26C	Safety of transport activities so far as is reasonably practicable. Shared duties remain with each party.
Executive due diligence — section 26D	Reasonable steps to ensure the legal entity complies with its safety duties. The primary duty and other defined safety duties have separate offence provisions.
Specified corporate offences — section 636	For a corporate executive officer, whether the specified offence and knowing authorisation or permission requirements are established.
Own transport function	Whether the individual also performs a defined chain function and has a primary duty in that capacity.

Who is an executive?

For a corporation, the definition includes directors and people concerned in or taking part in management, whatever their title. For an unincorporated partnership it includes a partner; for an unincorporated body, a management member. Budget authority may be relevant evidence, but it is not the statutory definition. Do not assume every supervisor is covered. Section 26D contains an exception for a person acting on a voluntary basis; other duties may still apply.

Primary duty offence categories

- Category 3: failure to comply with the primary duty.
- Category 2: the relevant failure exposes a person or class of people to a risk of death or serious injury or illness.
- Category 1: the specified conduct, without reasonable excuse, exposes a person to that risk, with recklessness as to the risk. It can include imprisonment for an individual.

An injury or crash is not required before serious risk matters. Equally, a bad outcome does not automatically establish every offence element. Technical breach labels such as minor or severe are a different classification. Use current penalty references for monetary amounts.

Apply the reasonably practicable test

- How likely is the risk or damage, and how serious could the harm be?
- What is known or ought reasonably to be known about the risk and ways to control it?
- Which controls are available and suitable?

- What is the cost, including whether it is grossly disproportionate to the likelihood of the risk or damage?

The Queensland text is the national-law reference used for this course. Participating jurisdictions apply the law through their own legislation; local modifications and other road and workplace safety laws also matter. Western Australia and the Northern Territory have their own arrangements.

Reference: [Heavy Vehicle National Law — current Queensland text](#). Check the local application law for the relevant jurisdiction. Reading reviewed 6 October 2026.

CoR practical guide — Map a risk and follow it through

Use this worksheet with a real transport job. Complete it with the people who do the work and the other parties who influence the risk.

Record	Questions to answer
Activity and functions	What happens from order to delivery? Which chain functions do we and the other parties perform?
Public risk	Who could be harmed, how could it happen, and what is creating the exposure?
Existing control	What prevents or reduces the risk? Is the control suitable and used?
Immediate response	Does the affected work need to pause or change now? Who can authorise a safe alternative?
Further control	What reasonably practicable improvement is needed? What resources or decision will it take?
Owner and due date	Who will act, by when, and who receives an escalation if it is delayed?
Verification	What real-work evidence will show the control is working? Who will check it and when?
Outcome	What was found? Close only when supported by evidence; reopen ineffective actions.

Example: a driver is unwell

A driver has time remaining under the applicable hours rules but says they cannot concentrate. Do not treat the hours report as proof of fitness. Pause the affected driving task, arrange a safe alternative and involve the appropriate competent person. Update the scheduler and customer and record the response.

Example: the loading delay becomes road pressure

Repeated warehouse delays leave drivers trying to meet the original delivery window. Control the immediate unsafe instruction. Review loading capacity, scheduling, customer terms and authority to

revise the plan. After changes, sample later jobs and speak with drivers to check whether pressure has reduced.

Evidence worth checking

- Driver capability demonstrated for the vehicle and task, beyond an induction signature.
- Planned and actual loading or delivery times, including required rest and foreseeable delays.
- Reliable weights, suitable restraint equipment and a practical stop-work route.
- Defect reports, fitness concerns and the decisions taken before work resumes.
- Overdue actions and recurring concerns, including their causes inside the business.

This worksheet supports risk management. Completing it does not by itself establish compliance; the control must work in the circumstances.

Reference: [Heavy Vehicle National Law — current Queensland text](#). Check the local application law for the relevant jurisdiction. Reading reviewed 6 October 2026.

CoR practical guide — Contracts and shared transport risks

Use contracts to organise safe work between parties. Each party retains its statutory duties, even when tasks are allocated to somebody else.

Check the practical arrangements

- Are delivery windows achievable with loading, queues, foreseeable delays and required rest?
- What reliable information about the goods, weights, vehicle and site must be shared?
- Who can revise the plan when the task cannot proceed safely?
- Do delay charges, incentives or instructions create pressure to speed or drive while fatigued or unfit?
- Who is the contact on each shift, and how are serious issues escalated?
- What monitoring and incident arrangements apply, and how are changes communicated?

What a contract cannot do

Section 742 makes a contract void to the extent it purports to exclude, limit or modify the operation of the law or transfer a duty. This is not a rule that the entire agreement automatically disappears. Section 26E also addresses specified prohibited requests and contracts; knowledge, or what ought reasonably to be known, and the specified effect matter. The primary duty must also be considered.

A useful conversation with a carrier

“Our receiving slot is causing a queue and drivers are reporting fatigue concerns. What needs to change so the task can be completed safely? Who will adjust the bookings today, what information will we share, and when will we check the effect?”

Keep the record

Record the risk discussed, agreed controls, owners and escalation contacts. Check both your own decisions and the other party's performance. A carrier's certificate does not resolve a risk created by your own unsafe delivery promise.

Reference: [Heavy Vehicle National Law — current Queensland text](#). Check the local application law for the relevant jurisdiction. Reading reviewed 6 October 2026.

Executive practical guide — Due diligence evidence and action

Use these questions to test the operation. The five groups in section 26D work together; a completed checklist is not a guarantee that the duty has been met.

Due diligence group	Evidence and questions
1. Current knowledge	How do relevant changes in law, guidance and industry practice reach you? What changed in the business as a result?
2. Understand the operation and risks	Can you trace a recent job, explain the public risks and describe the decisions that create them? Have you spoken with the people doing the work?
3. Resources	Are competent people, time, equipment and advice actually available and used? What remains unfunded or unavailable?
4. Implemented processes	How are risks controlled, safety information received and acted on promptly, and safety duties complied with? Test urgent and out-of-hours escalation.
5. Verify	What sample of actual work shows resources and processes are provided, used and implemented? What happened when an action failed?

Ask for two views in your report

The system view covers roles, competence, procedures, contractors and overdue corrective actions. The event and risk view covers specific exceptions, near misses, worker concerns and trends across speed, fatigue and fitness, mass, dimensions, load restraint and vehicle condition. Include pressures created by your own business.

For each significant issue	Record
Risk and exposure	What could happen, who is exposed, and how much or what type of work is involved?
Current protection	What controls the immediate exposure?
Decision required	What does the executive need to decide or resource?

For each significant issue	Record
Ownership	Who will deliver the action, by when?
Verification	What will demonstrate the result and who will check it?

Your next action

Choose one significant risk. Name the control owner and the evidence you will examine. Set a check date suited to the risk. Record what you find and keep the issue open if the control is ineffective.

Set a review cycle that fits the risk

Monthly executive reporting, periodic control checks and a broader annual review can be useful starting points. They are suggested arrangements, not universal legal deadlines. Serious exposure, repeated failures and changed work may require action much sooner.

Check accreditation and incident arrangements

Where accreditation is relevant, check the scheme, conditions, expiry and transition arrangements that apply after the August 2026 changes. Do not assume every business must hold accreditation or that all existing approvals ended immediately. For incidents, protect people, preserve relevant records and check the actual reporting requirements and deadlines.

Keep accurate evidence of the issue, information considered, decision, resources, owner and verified outcome. Never backdate a check or record a planned action as completed.

Reference: [Heavy Vehicle National Law — current Queensland text](#). Check the local application law for the relevant jurisdiction. Reading reviewed 6 October 2026.

Your action record

Activity and chain functions	
Significant public risk	
Immediate control	
Improvement or decision needed	
Control owner and due date	
Evidence to check	
Verification date and findings	
Close, reopen or escalate	

Record what actually happened. Do not backdate checks or describe planned work as complete.