

### **Tool Box Talk**

### **General Driving for Belt Loaders**

The belt loader is specifically designed to load and unload bags and cargo into elevated aircraft cargo bins. The belt loader is a low profile, 4-wheel frame with a variable speed conveyor belt on top. Driving on the airport operations area (AOA) can be a complex and dangerous task. Observing safe driving techniques allows everyone to work and drive in a productive and safe environment.

The following points should be covered in discussing the importance of driving the belt loader on the AOA.

#### **Guide for Discussion**

What is defensive driving? (Discussion Points)

- Driving defensively means taking every possible precaution to avoid an accident, despite the hazards around you.
- Defensive drivers are aware of the ever-changing factors of weather and changes in their surroundings.
- Defensive driving starts from the moment you get behind the wheel.

What actions should be taken before the belt loader is operated to help prevent potential hazards while driving it?

- Possess a valid driver's license and airport driver's license (if applicable).
- Complete a daily service and safety check at the beginning of each shift.
- Remove any foreign object debris (FOD) located on the belt loader and properly dispose of it.
- Remove any bags or cargo from the belt loader. Bags and cargo should not be transported on the belt loader.
- Ensure that the conveyor platform is in the lowered position.
- Be prepared to drive the belt loader in a safe manner:
  - Avoid distractions while operating a belt loader. Do not eat / drink or use cell phones / personal electronic devices.
  - Don't operate the belt loader when fatigued or impaired by alcohol, drugs, or medications that may impair your ability to operate the belt loader safely.
  - Don't lose focus while driving. Don't let personal distractions take your focus away from driving.

While driving the belt loader what should you pay attention to?

- All speed limits and traffic signs.
- The belt loader clearances due to the length of the belt loader when operating around walls, aircraft, inside tunnels or buildings.
- Movement of aircraft, emergency equipment, and pedestrian traffic. Give them the right of way.

What should you NEVER do while on a belt loader?

- Drive recklessly, abuse the equipment, or horseplay.
- Stand on a belt loader while it's in motion.
- Never allow additional riders on the belt loader when there are no seats available for them to sit in.
- Don't pass vehicles traveling in the same direction at intersections, blind spots, or other hazardous locations.
- Disembark from the belt loader while it's still in motion.

When parking a belt loader what actions should you perform?

- Ensure the belt loader is parked in the proper location.
- Wait until the belt loader has come to a complete stop before disembarking.
- Ensure the handbrake is set and the engine is turned off.
- Ensure the belt loader is in park or the neutral gear.

**Remember:** The AOA can be a congested area with lots of different vehicles and equipment. It's imperative that you take personal responsibility and drive the belt loader in a safe manner and to take the appropriate precautions while operating the belt loader.

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## ***Additional Resources***

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

- [14 CFR 139](#), Certification and Operations: Land Airports Servicing Certain Air Carriers. This is part of the electronic code of federal regulations. Specific areas of interest for the airline industry may include:
  - 139.101, Certification requirements: General
  - 139.203, Contents of airport certification manual
  - 139.205, Amendment of contents of airport certification manual
  - 139.329, Ground vehicles

[Part 139 Certification](#). Requires the FAA to issue airport operating certificates to airports that serve scheduled and unscheduled air carrier aircraft with more than 30 seats or that the FAA Administrator requires to have a certificate.

*Through the OSHA and Airline Group Safety Panel Alliance, the Airline Ground Safety Panel developed this Fact Sheet for informational purposes only. It does not necessarily reflect the official views of OSHA or the U.S. Department of Labor. 01/2009*