



Refuse collection vehicles IRELAND

- **DURATION:** four weeks in July 2024
- **SECTOR:** : waste collection
- **NUMBER OF INSPECTED ENTITIES:** 101 inspections
- **NUMBER OF INSPECTORS ENGAGED IN THE CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES:** 6



OVERVIEW OF THE CAMPAIGN

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) of Ireland conducted an inspection campaign on refuse collection vehicles (RCVs), focusing on the provision and wearing of high visibility clothing, driver blind spots, and compliance of man-riding footboards with the standard I.S. EN 1501-01:2021. The primary objective was to improve safety standards related to RCV operations. The campaign was initiated in response to concerning statistics: over a six-year period, there have been five fatalities involving RCVs, affecting both employees and members of the public.



ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Inspections were carried out over four weeks in July 2024. A team of experienced inspectors from the Waste team of the HSA carried out the inspections. Inspectors received a briefing, enforcement expectations, and checklist guidance. Inspectors had access to campaign objectives, tasks, checklists, and enforcement expectations for non-compliances observed during the campaign.



PLANNING OF THE CAMPAIGN

The planning process involved a detailed analysis of accidents and incident data, as well as complaints related to RCV operations. All available data on past accidents, incidents, and complaints were reviewed to identify common triggers. This analysis helped shape the campaign's objectives, ensuring it would not only raise awareness within the industry, but also remind duty holders of their legal responsibility, enforce compliance and ultimately reduce accident rates. As part of the planning phase, the HSA met with stakeholders, particularly the Irish Waste Management Association, to discuss accidents and incidents associated with RCV operations. The discussions helped to inform the industry about the planned campaign and its objective.

CAMPAIGN ASSESSMENT

Results were evaluated based on completed checklists, enforcement actions issued, and duty holders' compliance with the issued enforcement. There were 101 RCVs inspected during the campaign by the Waste team across 25 different RCV operators, and 87 enforcements were issued (including 7 INs and 20 PNs).

Key findings included:

- **High visibility clothing:** During the campaign a high level of compliance was observed regarding the wearing of high visibility clothing by RCV helpers. However, the campaign found that there is an opportunity for the industry to increase the use of Class 3 high visibility clothing, given that RCV helpers work close to moving vehicles.
- **RCV driver blind spots:** It was observed during the campaign that in many cases camera systems, mirrors and proximity alarms were in good condition, but there remains significant opportunity to retrofit extra aids to assist drivers particularly with reversing manoeuvres.
- **Man-riding footboards:** Overall the campaign found that footboards were in a poor condition. The issues identified by Inspectors included defective safety devices, damaged/unstable footboards, inadequate grip handles, and general non-conformance with the I.S. EN1501-1:2021.

Following the campaign, the HSA met with industry stakeholders to present the findings. The HSA highlight its concerns regarding the significant level of non-compliance, particularly regarding the inspection and maintenance of man-riding footboards.

To ensure transparency and raise awareness, the HSA also published a campaign finding note, summarising key issues identified during inspections and providing guidance on improving safety standards.