# Winter Checklist for Drivers and Transport Operators

**Before the winter season**

## Electrical parts

**Drive belt**
- Inspect the drive belt for any cracks or worn rubber (a drive belt can crack under extreme temperatures).
- Check the belt tension (a loose belt can reduce alternator output and run down batteries).

**Electrical connections**
- Check the electrical connections between the vehicle and the trailer.

**Battery**
- Check battery charging, as cold weather starts make the vehicle battery work much harder.

**Alternator**
- Check the charging rate of the alternator when the system is under full load with all equipment switched on.

## Tyres

**Winter tyres**
- Use winter tyres bearing the marks M+S, M.S or M&S (they offer better traction and handling in a variety of winter conditions, especially when driving in mud and snow).
- Fit winter tyres at least on the drive axle (check national requirements).

**Tyre pressure**
- Correctly inflate tyres for better grip, braking distance and handling (cold winter temperatures typically reduce tyre pressure).
- Follow the recommended pressure mentioned in the owner manual.

## Fluids

**Radiator**
- Inspect the condition of the radiator, the hoses and the opening and/or closing of the thermostat.

**Antifreeze**
- Refill antifreeze if necessary, using the antifreeze ratio recommended by the manufacturer.
- Use a tester to check the fluid for its freeze point while the engine is cold.

**Windscreen washer fluid**
- Use a windscreen washer fluid that does not freeze in low temperatures.

**Fluid levels of power-trains**
- Use high quality power-trains oil (effective in protecting the motor and running gears in cold start situations).

**Oil and oil filter**
- Use the oil recommended by the vehicle manufacturer and check the oil level manually.

**Air dryer cartridge**
- Replace if necessary.

**Water separator**
- Drain the water separator in the fuel system.

## Miscellaneous equipment

**In case of incident/accident**
- Always carry a first aid kit, a map, an ice-scraper, a snow brush, a torch, warning triangles, flares, a tow rope and jump leads, a shovel, a bag of sand, a blanket, winter gloves and a mobile phone.

**Auxiliary cab heating system**
- Check the system works correctly.
This checklist is provided to you by the IRU Academy, the training arm of the International Road Transport Union (IRU).

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