

Line of separation and loading pigs

Anything that is contaminated with even a tiny amount of PEDv-infected pig faeces can be a source of infection for other pigs.

Line of separation

A line of separation is a way of differentiating between the farm facilities, its animals and staff from lorries, trailers and people who must remain outside of the pig production area. This could include hauliers, feed deliveries, contractors removing manure etc.

The position of the line of separation depends on the farm and the situation, but could be:

- At the tailgate of the lorry
- Half way across the loading ramp
- At the building door
- Demarcating the perimeter.

There may be multiple areas where the line of separation is drawn.

The line should be visible and clear to everyone, either in paint or tape, and all visitors and staff should be aware of its significance.

Two rules:

1. The haulier/external visitor must not step over the line
2. The farm staff must not step over the line.



Anything that crosses the line eg pig boards, must be washed and disinfected before coming back across again.

Never cross the line of separation

Loading pigs

Moving pigs is essential but whether the move is off or onto the farm, there are potential risks in introducing disease to the premises.

Even with meticulously clean lorries there is still a chance of spreading disease to the clean trailer, or the pigs being loaded, with any infectious agents that could be on the driver's boots, clothing, hands or equipment.

1. Scheduling transport

Producer considerations

- Speak to your haulier about the health status of your pigs and together agree on a suitable day
- Give all drivers specific instructions as to the risk of the stock they are carrying and biosecurity protocols to follow.

Haulier considerations

- Schedule transport so that stock from high risk farms is carried at the end of the week and **never** immediately before stock from disease-free farms
- If possible use dedicated transport for positive and high risk stock
- Give all drivers specific instructions as to the risk of the stock they are carrying and biosecurity protocols to follow.

2. Preparation

Producer considerations

- Make expectations for loading animals clear to the livestock haulier before arrival
- A clear line of separation should be identified and communicated
- Organise your lairage – see below
- Have clean overalls (or wrapped disposable) and boots available for the driver.

Haulier considerations

- Ensure that vehicles are appropriately cleaned and disinfected before arrival at the farm (see **SOP 5** and **SOP 7**)
- Pay special attention to cab
- Only use plastic pig boards which can be easily cleaned and disinfected, not wood
- Understand the line of separation.

Plan your loading area

The loading area should always be at the farm perimeter. If not possible, consider building temporary lairage during disease outbreak to protect your stock.

The loading area must:

- Be clean and ready for pigs
- Have a line of separation, this could be at the back of the trailer, tailgate or lairage gate, but must be clearly marked and agreed by all
- Have all required equipment (eg pig boards, aerosol sprays, slapmarkers) clean and in good working order
- Have plenty of appropriate bedding material ready for lorry
- Have a fresh supply of a disinfectant that is effective against the target disease and correctly diluted
- Have clean, disinfected boots and overalls (or wrapped disposable) ready for the driver at the end of the loading ramp past line of separation
- Have enough staff available to help load pigs from the site (the driver must never enter the farm to help).

3. On arrival at farm

Producer considerations

- Ensure driver follows **SOP 4** and **SOP 5** and that you are entirely satisfied with vehicle cleanliness (without stepping in or touching the vehicle).

Haulier considerations

- Driver should follow **SOP 4** and **SOP 5**
- Haulier must change into protective clothing and boots on arrival, this should be supplied by the farm
- Keep normal clothing and footwear clean and uncontaminated by the farm.

4. The loading process

Producer considerations

- Ensure enough staff available (the haulier must not help you get pigs out)
- Do not share any equipment with the haulier.

Haulier considerations

- **Never** cross the line of separation or allow your equipment to cross.

The loading process basics

- Farm staff bring pigs up to line of separation
- Once pigs cross the line of separation they are the responsibility of the haulier
- Ensure pig flow is in one direction
- No-one and nothing may cross the line of separation except the pigs.

5. If the line of separation is inadvertently crossed:

- **By farm equipment** (eg pig boards, spray markers), they must stay on the 'dirty' side until thoroughly cleaned and disinfected
- **By farm staff**, they **must** follow the farm's re-entry biosecurity measures before they can resume loading process (ie shower in/out, bench entry system or at very least changes boots and clothes and wash hands). 'Dirty' clothes and boots should be placed in container out of way of normal farm foot traffic where they can be thoroughly washed and disinfected after loading.

6. Once all pigs have been loaded

Producer considerations

- Farm staff should clean and disinfect the loading area immediately after the transport vehicle has been loaded and pulled away. Ensure drainage is away from the pigs
- Any farm staff that cross the line of separation to clean the loading area must follow the re-entry biosecurity protocols of the site (see point 5 above)
- Also clean and disinfect drivers' boots and wash overalls on hot cycle (or dispose).

Haulier considerations

- Remove protective clothing
- Leave farm boots and overalls in designated box by lairage
- Disinfect hands before getting back into vehicle.

7. After moving pigs

- The vehicle must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected inside and outside (refer to **SOP 7**).

Haulier summary

- Approach every contact with a farm, abattoir or market as if it could contaminate your lorry and trailer
- Assume every site you touch is a risk and that your vehicle is a risk to every site. Do not be responsible for transferring this disease
- Be aware and be informed of where the line of separation is in every situation, especially on arrival to farms, and do not cross it
- Farms should provide you with clean and disinfected boots and overalls, but carry your own clean set for use if needed.

Never cross the line of separation

As all farms are different it is important you work with your vet and haulier to establish a protocol which works for you.

Although this document is written for PEDv, the above precautions will help prevent the spread of any pig disease and should be considered as standard biosecurity measures.