



# Victoria Government Gazette

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**SPECIAL**

## Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 1988

### GENERAL PERMIT FOR A 3 AXLE TRUCK CONNECTED TO A 4 AXLE DOG TRAILER GROSSING UP TO 50 TONNES

Regulation 724 of the Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 1988 authorises the Roads Corporation, by notice in the Victoria Government Gazette, to allow vehicles which exceed mass or dimension limits prescribed in the Regulations to be used on roads.

Regulation 819 of the Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 1988 authorises the Roads Corporation to approve a person to use, or cause or permit to be used, on a road a motor vehicle which is towing more than one vehicle.

Under the above two Regulations, I, Geoff Kloot, delegate of the Roads Corporation, allow a 3 axle truck connected to a 4 axle dog trailer, together with any load, to exceed mass and dimension limits prescribed in Divisions 2 and 3, Part 7 of the Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 1988 to travel on roads as described in Part 1 of this notice if they comply with all the mass and dimension limits in Part 2 and the vehicle requirements in Part 3.

This notice is effective from 1 January 1997 until 31 December 2002. However, if any condition in this notice is breached, the notice is invalid in relation to the vehicle the subject of the breach, and depending on what the breach is, the owner and the driver of the 3 axle truck connected to a 4 axle dog trailer, and any person who caused or permitted it to be used on a road, may be prosecuted for exceeding normal mass or dimension limits.

Any trip permitted under this notice is made at the vehicle owner's and driver's risk absolutely. No representation is made by the Roads Corporation that any road, bridge, culvert, causeway or grid is capable of withstanding the vehicle or combination.

GEOFF KLOOT  
General Manager  
Traffic and Roads Use Management  
Roads Corporation

Dated 20 December 1996

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## **PART 1**

### **ROADS**

- 1.1 (1) Travel is permitted on any roads that have been declared under Schedule 5 of the Transport Act 1983.
- 1.1 (2) Travel is allowed on a road that has not been declared under Schedule 5 of the Transport Act 1983 if the road is along the most direct and practical route between the point of pick-up or delivery, and a road that has been declared under Schedule 5 of the Transport Act 1983.
- 1.1 (3) In spite of subclauses (1) and (2), a vehicle or combination must not travel on a road, bridge or structure where any posted mass limit would be exceeded.

## **PART 2**

### **MASS AND DIMENSION LIMITS FOR A 3 AXLE TRUCK CONNECTED TO A 4 AXLE DOG TRAILER**

#### **Mass limits for tyres, wheels and axles**

- 2.1 (1) The mass on a wheel or axle must not exceed the limit set by its manufacturer.
- 2.1 (2) The size and capacity of a tyre to be fitted to a vehicle must be determined using a cold inflation pressure that does not exceed the lesser of:
  - (a) the pressure recommended by the manufacturer of the tyre; and
  - (b) in the case of:
    - (i) a radial ply tyre - 825 kilopascals; or
    - (ii) another tyre - 700 kilopascals.
- 2.1 (3) The mass on an axle group or single axle must not exceed the limit provided for it in Table 1.
- 2.1 (4) The mass limit in Table 1 that applies to an axle group that includes a retractable axle must be determined as if the axle did not exist, unless subclause (5) applies.
- 2.1 (5) A retractable axle is part of an axle group for the purposes of Table 1 if, when the mass on the group exceeds 6 tonnes the tyres on the axle are in contact with the ground, and the load-sharing suspension system is operating on each axle (including the retractable axle) and tyre in the group.
- 2.1 (6) The sum of the mass on the axle groups and single axle on a vehicle or combination must not exceed the sum of the mass limits of the axle groups and axles, as provided in Table 1.

**Table 1****Mass Limits for Single Axles & Axle Groups**

| Description of single axle or axle group     | Mass limits (tonnes) |
|--|----------------------|
| Single steer axle on a motor vehicle         | 6.00                 |
| Tandem axle group fitted with dual tyres on: |                      |
| (a) the rear of the motor vehicle            | 16.50                |
| (b) the front and rear of the trailer        | 13.75                |

**Mass limits relating to axle spacings**

2.2 (1) The mass limits in Table 2 must not be exceeded in relation to the distances set out in the Table that apply to the vehicle or combination.

2.2 (2) Each distance in the Table refers to:

- (a) the distance from the centre of any single axle to the centre of the furthest axle in any axle group; or
- (b) the greatest distance between the centres of axles in any 2 axle groups.

2.2 (3) The mass limits in Table 2 apply to the sum of the mass on each axle group or single axle in the distance referred to in the Table, including the axles between which the distance is measured.

**Table 2**  
**Mass Limits Relating to Axle Spacing**

| Distance (metres) |               | Mass Limit<br>(tonnes) | Distance (metres) |               | Mass Limit<br>(tonnes) |
|-------------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| exceeding         | not exceeding |                        | exceeding         | not exceeding |                        |
| 3.5               | 3.7           | 23.0                   | 8.0               | 8.2           | 36.5                   |
| 3.7               | 3.8           | 23.5                   | 8.2               | 8.3           | 37.0                   |
| 3.8               | 4.0           | 24.0                   | 8.3               | 8.5           | 37.5                   |
| 4.0               | 4.2           | 24.5                   | 8.5               | 8.7           | 38.0                   |
| 4.2               | 4.3           | 25.0                   | 8.7               | 8.8           | 38.5                   |
| 4.3               | 4.5           | 25.5                   | 8.8               | 9.0           | 39.0                   |
| 4.5               | 4.7           | 26.0                   | 9.0               | 9.2           | 39.5                   |
| 4.7               | 4.8           | 26.5                   | 9.2               | 9.3           | 40.0                   |
| 4.8               | 5.0           | 27.0                   | 9.3               | 9.5           | 40.5                   |
| 5.0               | 5.2           | 27.5                   | 9.5               | 9.7           | 41.0                   |
| 5.2               | 5.3           | 28.0                   | 9.7               | 9.8           | 41.5                   |
| 5.3               | 5.5           | 28.5                   | 9.8               | 10.0          | 42.0                   |
| 5.5               | 5.7           | 29.0                   | 10.0              | 10.5          | 42.5                   |
| 5.7               | 5.8           | 29.5                   | 10.5              | 11.0          | 43.0                   |
| 5.8               | 6.0           | 30.0                   | 11.0              | 11.5          | 43.5                   |
| 6.0               | 6.2           | 30.5                   | 11.5              | 12.0          | 44.0                   |
| 6.2               | 6.3           | 31.0                   | 12.0              | 12.5          | 44.5                   |
| 6.3               | 6.5           | 31.5                   | 12.5              | 13.0          | 45.0                   |
| 6.5               | 6.7           | 32.0                   | 13.0              | 13.5          | 45.5                   |
| 6.7               | 6.8           | 32.5                   | 13.5              | 14.0          | 46.0                   |
| 6.8               | 7.0           | 33.0                   | 14.0              | 14.5          | 46.5                   |
| 7.0               | 7.2           | 33.5                   | 14.5              | 15.0          | 47.0                   |
| 7.2               | 7.3           | 34.0                   | 15.0              | 15.5          | 47.5                   |
| 7.3               | 7.5           | 34.5                   | 15.5              | 16.0          | 48.0                   |
| 7.5               | 7.7           | 35.0                   | 16.0              | 16.5          | 48.5                   |
| 7.7               | 7.8           | 35.5                   | 16.5              | 17.0          | 49.0                   |
| 7.8               | 8.0           | 36.0                   | 17.0              | 17.5          | 49.5                   |
|                   |               |                        | 17.5              | -             | 50.0                   |

**Gross mass limits for vehicles**

2.3 (1) The maximum gross mass limits are:

- (a) motor vehicle (truck) = 22.5 tonnes;
- (b) dog trailer = 27.5 tonnes;
- (c) 3 axle truck connected to a 4 axle dog trailer = 50.0 tonnes.

2.3 (2) The gross mass of a dog trailer may exceed the gross mass of the truck to achieve the maximum mass limits in 2.3 (1) above. However, an unladen truck must not tow a laden trailer which exceeds the mass of the unladen truck.

2.3 (3) The total mass of a vehicle and any load must not exceed the vehicle's GVM\GTM.

2.3 (4) The total mass of a 3 axle truck connected to a 4 axle dog trailer, and any load, must not exceed the towing vehicle's GCM.

2.3 (5) The manufacturer's ratings for the vehicle and components must not be exceeded.

**Dimension Limits**

2.4 (1) A 3 axle truck connected to a 4 axle dog trailer, together with any load, must not be more than:

- (a) 19 metres long;
- (b) 4.3 metres high.

2.4 (2) To maximise the stability of a 3 axle truck connected to a 4 axle dog trailer:

- (a) the wheel base of the motor vehicle (truck) must be a minimum of 4.5 metres and the wheel base of the dog trailer must be a minimum of 5.0 metres; or
- (b) the wheel base of the motor vehicle (truck) must be a minimum of 4.9 metres and the wheel base of the dog trailer must be a minimum of 4.5 metres.

**PART 3**

**VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS FOR A 3 AXLE TRUCK CONNECTED TO  
A 4 AXLE DOG TRAILER**

**Power to weight ratio**

3.1 (1) The power to weight ratio (the power of the truck's engine in Horse Power compared to the gross mass of the 3 axle truck connected to a 4 axle dog trailer) must not be less than 8:1 (HP/t) or 6:1 (kW/t).

**Vehicle Suspensions**

- 3.2 (2) A 3 axle truck connected to a 4 axle dog trailer must have air suspensions on all axles, except for the steer axle of the truck which can be either an air or mechanical suspension.

**PART 4**

**DEFINITIONS**

- 4.1(1) In this notice:

**"Air suspension"** means a vehicle suspension system in which:

- (a) the vertical movement between each axle and the body of the vehicle is controlled by variations in the pressure of air in an air spring; and
- (b) the proportion of the vehicle's mass that is borne by the air spring does not vary substantially despite variations in the pressure of the air spring; and
- (c) functioning dampeners are incorporated on each axle.

**"axle"** means one or more shafts positioned in a line across a vehicle, on which one or more wheels intended to support the vehicle turn;

**"combination"** means a motor vehicle connected to one or more trailers;

**"converter dolly"** means a trailer with one axle group and a fifth wheel coupling designed to convert a semi-trailer into a dog trailer;

**"dog trailer"** means a trailer (including a trailer consisting of a semi-trailer and converter dolly) with:

- (a) one axle group at the front that is steered by connection to the towing vehicle by a drawbar; and
- (b) one axle group at the rear;

**"drawbar"** means a part of a trailer (other than a semi-trailer) that connects the trailer body to a coupling for towing purposes;

**"driver"** means the person driving or in control of a motor vehicle;

**"fifth wheel coupling"** means a device, other than the upper rotating element and the kingpin (which are parts of a semi-trailer), used with a prime mover, semi-trailer or a converter dolly to permit quick coupling and uncoupling and to provide for articulation;

**"GCM"** (gross combination mass), in relation to a motor vehicle, means the greatest possible sum of the maximum loaded mass of the motor vehicle and of any vehicles that may lawfully be towed by it at one time;

- (a) as specified by the motor vehicle's manufacturer:
  - (i) on a plate fixed to the vehicle by the manufacturer; or
  - (ii) if the manufacturer has not specified the sum of the maximum loaded mass on a plate fixed to the vehicle - in another place; or
- (b) as specified by the vehicle registration authority if:
  - (i) the manufacturer has not specified the sum of the maximum loaded mass; or
  - (ii) the manufacturer cannot be identified; or
  - (iii) the vehicle has been modified to the extent that the manufacturer's specification is no longer appropriate;

**"GTM"** (gross trailer mass) means the mass transmitted to the ground by the axles of a trailer when the trailer is loaded to its GVM and connected to a towing vehicle;

**"GVM"** (gross vehicle mass) means the maximum loaded mass of a vehicle:

- (a) as specified by the manufacturer; or
- (b) as specified by the vehicle registration authority if:
  - (i) the manufacturer has not specified a maximum loaded mass; or
  - (ii) the manufacturer cannot be identified; or
  - (iii) the vehicle has been modified to the extent that the manufacturer's specification is no longer appropriate;

**"load"** in relation to a vehicle, includes anything that is normally removed from the vehicle when the vehicle is not in use;

**"load-sharing suspension system"** means an axle group suspension system that:

- (a) is built to divide the load between the tyres on the group so that no tyre carries a mass more than 10% greater than the mass it would carry if the load were divided equally; and
- (b) has effective damping characteristics on all axles of the group;

**"motor vehicle"** means a vehicle that is built to be propelled by a motor that forms part of the vehicle;

**"owner"**, in relation to a vehicle, means:

- (a) if the vehicle:
  - (i) is registered - a person in whose name the vehicle is registered under a Commonwealth, State or Territory Act; or
  - (ii) is not registered - a person to whom a mark, plate, or permit has been issued to allow the vehicle to be used; and
- (b) a person who, according to the vehicle registration authority's records, has acquired the vehicle from the person in whose name the vehicle is registered under the relevant law; and
- (c) a person who is entitled to the possession of the vehicle:

**"prime mover"** means a motor vehicle built to tow a semi-trailer;

**"rear overhang line"** means the centre of the axle group at the rear of the vehicle, determined without regard to the presence of any steerable axle or retractable axle in the group unless all axles in the group are steerable or retractable;

**"retractable axle"** means an axle that can be raised so that the tyres on the axle do not touch the ground;

**"road"** means:

- (a) an area that is open to or used by the public and is developed for, or has as one of its uses, the driving or riding of motor vehicles; and
- (b) includes "highway" as defined in the Road Safety Act 1986;

**"semi-trailer"** means a trailer that has:

- (a) one axle group towards the rear; and
- (b) a means of attachment to a prime mover that would result in some of the load being imposed on the prime mover;

**"tandem axle group"** means a group of at least 2 axles, in which the horizontal distance between the centre-lines of the outermost axles is at least 1 metre, but not more than 2 metres;

**"truck"** means a rigid motor vehicle that is principally constructed as a load carrying vehicle;

**"trailer"** means a vehicle that is built to be towed, or is towed, by a motor vehicle, but does not include a motor vehicle being towed;

**"truck"** means a motor vehicle with a GVM of at least 4.5 tonnes;

**"vehicle"** includes the vehicle's equipment and any substances that the vehicle is carrying that are essential for its operation;

**"vehicle registration authority"**, in relation to a vehicle, means:

- (a) the authority that last registered the vehicle; or
- (b) if the vehicle has never been registered - the authority responsible for registering vehicles in the State or Territory in which the vehicle is used or is intended to be used.

**"wheelbase"**, means:

- (a) in relation to a motor vehicle, the distance from the centreline of the vehicle's foremost axle to the rear overhang line; or
- (b) in relation to a dog trailer, the distance from the centre of the front axle group to the rear overhang line.









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