



Standard Conditions Legislative Requirements

Class 1 load carrying vehicles and special purpose vehicles

June 2023

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1 Definitions

'Built-up Area' has the meaning it has for the purposes of the Road Rules.

'Delineator' means a yellow, rigid piece of material commonly known as a 'delineator' that—

- is at least 300mm long and at least 300mm wide; and
- complies with class 1, 2, 400 or 100 of AS/NZS 1906 'Retroreflective materials and devices for road traffic control purposes' applying to the delineator at the delineator's date of manufacture.

'Divided road' means a road on which traffic travelling in opposite directions is separated by a central strip.

'Freeway' has the meaning it has for the purposes of the Road Rules.

'Large Indivisible Item' means an item that—

- can not be divided without extreme effort, expense or risk of damage to it; and
- can not be carried on any heavy vehicle without contravening a mass requirement or dimension requirement.

'Low –beam', for a headlight fitted to a heavy vehicle, means the light is built or adjusted so that, when the vehicle is standing on level ground, the top of the main beam of light projected is—

- a) not higher than the centre of the headlight or fog light, when measured 8m in front of the vehicle; and
- b) not more than 1m higher than the level where the vehicle is standing, when measured 25m in front of the vehicle.

'Multi-lane Road' has the meaning it has for the purposes of the Road Rules

'Rear marking plate' means a plate that—

- warns other road users that the vehicle to which the plate is attached is an oversize vehicle; and
- complies with the '[VSB 12—National Code of Practice—Rear Marking Plates](#)' published by the Regulator.

'Rear Markers' means red lights known as 'rear markers'.

'Safe Parking Area' for a Class 1 heavy vehicle, means an area at which vehicles of that kind may be parked lawfully and safely.

'Side Markers' means lights showing yellow to the front and red to the rear and known as 'side markers'.

2 Introduction

When a mass or dimension exemption (permit) is issued under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL), it is issued subject to conditions of the HVNL, the Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulations (MDL) and other legislation.

This document outlines the key operational requirements for operations of Class 1 heavy vehicles carrying - or designed for the purpose of carrying- a large indivisible article, and special purpose vehicles (SPVs). Those requirements are collectively known as 'standard conditions'.

Please note that these requirements may be modified by a permit or notice.

A heavy vehicle is a Class 1 heavy vehicle if it, together with its load, does not comply with a prescribed mass requirement or prescribed dimension requirement applying to it, and—

- it is a special purpose vehicle; or
- it is an agricultural vehicle other than an agricultural trailer; or
- it is a heavy vehicle carrying, or designed for the purpose of carrying, a large indivisible item, including, for example, a combination including a low loader; but
- it is not a road train or B-double, or carrying a freight container designed for multi-modal transport.

For the purpose of these standard conditions, indivisible items include, but are not limited to—

- a bulldozer;
- an excavator; and
- large earthmover tyres.

For the purpose of these standard conditions, loads that are not regarded as large indivisible items include, but are not limited to:

- modular loads that can be reduced in mass or dimension without the need for specialised tools or lifting equipment; and
- inter-modal containers (except in specific cases).

In these standard conditions, a Class 1 heavy vehicle is a heavy vehicle carrying, or designed for the purpose of carrying, a large indivisible item that exceeds one or more of the dimension limits in Table 1 or Table 2:

Table 1 - Dimension limits

Type	Length (m)	Width (m)	Height (m)	Rear Overhang
Rigid Truck	12.5	2.5	4.3	3.7m or 60% of the wheelbase (whichever is less)
Articulated Vehicle (Prime mover and semi-trailer/trailers)	19.0	2.5	4.3	3.7m or 60% of the wheelbase (whichever is less)

Table 2 - Mass limits

Overall GCM	42.5t**
Steer Axle	6.0t **
Twin steer	10.0t (not load sharing) or

	11.0t (if load sharing)
Tandem Axle	16.5t
Triaxle	20.0t
Quad Axle	20.0t

**6.5t (43.0t overall GCM) for a complying steer axle vehicle.

3 Application of standard conditions

The standard conditions apply to the following heavy vehicles when operating under a Class 1 mass or dimension exemption—

- A Class 1 heavy vehicle designed for the purpose of carrying a large indivisible item (including a combination including a low loader), but that is not—
 - a road train or B-double; or
 - carrying a freight container designed for multi-modal transport.
- A special purpose vehicle, being –
 - a motor vehicle or trailer, other than an agricultural vehicle or a tow truck, built for a purpose other than carrying goods; or
 - a concrete pump or fire truck.

4 Requirements subject to other legislation

4.1 Registration must be valid

All vehicles in a vehicle combination must comply with jurisdictional registration regulation or be exempted from registration under the Law.

4.2 Manufacturing Ratings

Manufacturer's component ratings must not be exceeded. In particular, the mass of any axle/axle group must not exceed the manufacturer's maximum ratings for tyres, axles or suspension. The prime mover manufacturer's GVM/GCM and trailer manufacturer's ATM/GTM ratings must not be exceeded.

4.3 Mass and Dimension Limits

Roads may be subject to temporary or permanent posted load limits. A mass or dimension exemption (permit) does not exempt a vehicle from an applicable mass or dimension limit displayed on an official traffic sign or traffic control item.

5 Requirements of the Heavy Vehicle National Law

5.1 Carriage of permit

The driver of a Class 1 heavy vehicle who is driving the vehicle under a mass or dimension exemption (permit) must keep a copy of the permit for the exemption in the driver's possession.

5.2 Produce permit

3An authorised officer (authorised by the NHVR under the HVNL) may, for compliance purposes, require the driver of the heavy vehicle to produce, for inspection by the officer a document, device or other thing the driver is required under the HVNL to keep in the driver's possession while driving the vehicle.

6 Standard conditions – general

6.1 Safe loading – MDL Sch7, s1

A load on a heavy vehicle must not be placed in a way that makes the vehicle unstable or unsafe.

A load on a heavy vehicle must be secured so it is unlikely to fall or be dislodged from the vehicle.

An appropriate method must be used to restrain the load on a heavy vehicle.

Note: See the [Load Restraint Guide](#) mentioned in [section 115](#) of the Law and the evidentiary effect under the section of evidence that a load on a heavy vehicle was not restrained in a way that met a performance standard stated in the guide.

6.2 Smallest Practicable Dimensions for Unladen Travel – MDL Sch 8, s1

A Class 1 heavy vehicle that is not carrying goods must be kept at its smallest practicable dimensions, with any booms fully retracted ([Schedule 8](#)).

6.3 Travel restrictions at night– MDL Sch8, s7

A Class 1 heavy vehicle that, together with any load, is wider than 3.1m or longer than 22.0m, must not, while being used at night –

- travel outside an urban area; or
- travel in an urban area without being accompanied by a pilot vehicle.

6.4 No travel in low visibility – MDL Sch8, s8

Travel is not permitted during periods of low visibility where visibility is less than 250 m during the daytime (e.g. fog, heavy rain, smoke, dust, insect plague, etc.). If travel is underway when visibility is reduced to less than 250 m in the daytime, the driver must drive into the nearest safe parking area and wait until visibility improves beyond 250 m before continuing to travel.

6.5 Minimum following distance – MDL Sch8, s9

The person driving a Class 1 heavy vehicle that is an oversize vehicle must drive at least 200m behind another oversize vehicle travelling in front of it, unless the person is—

- driving on a multilane road or a length of road in a built-up area; or
- overtaking.

6.6 Allowing Overtaking – MDL Sch8, s10

The driver must at regular intervals and to the extent reasonably practicable, move the heavy vehicle off the road to allow other vehicles to overtake it.

6.7 Assessing a route before travel – MDL Sch 8, s11

- 6.7.1 Before a heavy vehicle is driven along any route, its driver and operator must be satisfied that the route has been assessed and that the vehicle can be driven along it without contravening the requirements in 6.7.2.
- 6.7.2 A heavy vehicle must not be driven along a route if to do so would be likely to cause—
- disruption to telecommunication, electricity, rail, gas, water or sewage services (relevant services); or
 - damage to a road (including a bridge), structure, rail crossing or tree (relevant property).
- 6.7.3 Subsection (6.7.2) does not apply if the entity responsible for the relevant services or relevant property has given permission for the vehicle to travel along the route, and the vehicle is driven in accordance with the permission.

7 Warning Devices

7.1 Warning Lights

If a heavy vehicle is, together with any load, wider than 3.0m, a warning light must be attached to the vehicle while it is being used in the daytime. (MDL Sch8, s4)

If a heavy vehicle that is an oversize vehicle is being used at night—

- side markers must be displayed, not more than 2m apart, along the total length of each side of the vehicle and any load projecting from the front or rear of the vehicle; and
- 2 rear markers must be fitted to the rear of any load projecting from the rear of the vehicle, within 400mm of each side of the load and at least 1m but not more than 2.1m above the ground; and
- a warning light must be attached to the vehicle if it, together with any load, is wider than 2.5m or longer than 22m. (MDL Sch8, s8).

7.2 Warning lights and delineators if load projecting from vehicle - MDL Sch8, s3

- 7.2.1 If a load projects more than 150mm beyond a side of a heavy vehicle, and the projection is less than 500mm thick from top to bottom—
- a warning light must be attached to the vehicle; and
 - 2 delineators must be attached to the projection in the way stated in 7.2.2 on each side of the vehicle on which the load projects more than 150mm.
- 7.2.2 For 7.2.1, the delineators must be attached in the following way on each side of the vehicle on which the load projects more than 150mm—
- at least 1 delineator must be attached to the front of the projection and at least 1 delineator must be attached to the rear of the projection;
 - a delineator attached to the front of the projection must be attached so that its reflective surface is facing forward of the vehicle;
 - a delineator attached to the rear of the projection must be attached so that its reflective surface is facing rearward from the vehicle.

7.3 Characteristics of warning light – MDL Sch8, s35

7.3.1 A warning light attached to a heavy vehicle, pilot vehicle or escort vehicle, when switched on, must—

- emit a yellow-coloured light of rotating and flashing effect; and
- flash between 120 and 200 times a minute; and
- have a power of at least—
 - if LED technology is used— 24W; or
 - if another technology is used—55W; and
- not be a strobe light.

7.3.2 However, the requirements of 7.3.1 do not apply to a warning light that—

- is attached to an escort vehicle that is a police vehicle or transport enforcement vehicle; and
- complies with the requirements of the light vehicle standards for lights attached to a vehicle of that kind.

7.4 Visibility of warning lights – MDL Sch8, s36

A warning light attached to a heavy vehicle, pilot vehicle or escort vehicle must be—

- clearly visible at a distance of 500m in all directions; or
- supplemented by 1 or more additional warning lights so that the light emanating from at least 1 of them is clearly visible at a distance of 500m in any direction.

However, for a pilot vehicle travelling in front of a heavy vehicle, a filter may be placed behind the warning light attached to the pilot vehicle to reduce the intensity of the light directed to the driver of the heavy vehicle.

7.5 Switch for warning lights to be within easy reach – MDL Sch8, s37

The switch for a warning light attached to a heavy vehicle, pilot vehicle or escort vehicle must be within easy reach of the driver in the normal driving position in the vehicle.

7.6 Warning lights to be on if required, and off if not – MDL Sch8, s38

A warning light attached to a heavy vehicle or pilot vehicle must only be switched on when the heavy vehicle or pilot vehicle is travelling, or is stationary in a position that is likely to cause danger to other road users.

A warning light attached to a pilot vehicle or escort vehicle must be switched on when the vehicle is travelling and accompanying a Class 1 heavy vehicle.

7.7 Warning Signs and Flags – MDL Sch8, s2

7.7.1 A heavy vehicle that, together with its load, is wider than 2.5m or longer than 25.0m must have—

- a warning sign attached to the front of the vehicle; and
- a warning sign attached to the rear of the vehicle or, if a load projects from the rear of the vehicle, to the rear of the load; and
- 4 brightly coloured red, red and yellow, or yellow flags, each at least 450mm by 450mm, fixed as follows—

- a flag must be attached at each side of the front of the vehicle or, if a load projects from the front of the vehicle, at each side of the front of the load;
- a flag must be fixed at each side of the rear of the vehicle or, if a load projects from the rear of the vehicle, at each side of the rear of the load.

7.7.2 A heavy vehicle that, together with its load, is not wider than 2.5m, and whose length is more than 22m but not more than 25m, must have a warning sign attached to the rear of the vehicle or, if a load projects from the rear of the vehicle, to the rear of the load.

7.7.3 The requirements in 7.7.1 and 7.7.2 do not apply to a rigid mobile crane less than 3.1m wide.

7.8 Size of warning sign – MDL Sch8, s45

A warning sign on a heavy vehicle must be at least 1200mm long and at least 450mm high.

The length of a warning sign on a heavy vehicle may be split into 2 parts, in which case the combined length of its parts must be at least 1200mm.

7.9 Face of warning sign – MDL Sch8, s41, 46

The face of a warning sign on a heavy vehicle or pilot vehicle must have—

- a yellow surface complying with class 1, 2, 400 or 100 of AS 1906 ‘Retro-reflective Materials and Devices for Road Traffic Control Purposes’ applying to the warning sign at the sign’s date of manufacture; and

Note: AS 1906 ‘Retro-reflective Materials and Devices for Road Traffic Control Purposes’ may be purchased from Standards Australia at <www.standards.org.au>.

- a black border that is at least 20mm wide and, unless the sign has been made with a box edge, whose outermost edge is at least 10mm in from the edge of the sign; and
- its manufacturer’s name or trademark, and the brand and class of material used for the warning sign’s surface, permanently marked in letters at least 3mm but no more than 10mm high—
 - for a heavy vehicle—on any visible part of the sign; or
 - for a pilot vehicle—on any visible part of the sign other than a bottom corner.

A warning sign on a heavy vehicle must show the word ‘OVERSIZE’, in black capital letters, and in typeface Series C(N) complying with AS 1744 ‘Forms of Letters and Numerals for Road Signs’.

Note: AS 1744 ‘Forms of Letters and Numerals for Road Signs’ may be purchased from Standards Australia at <www.standards.org.au>.

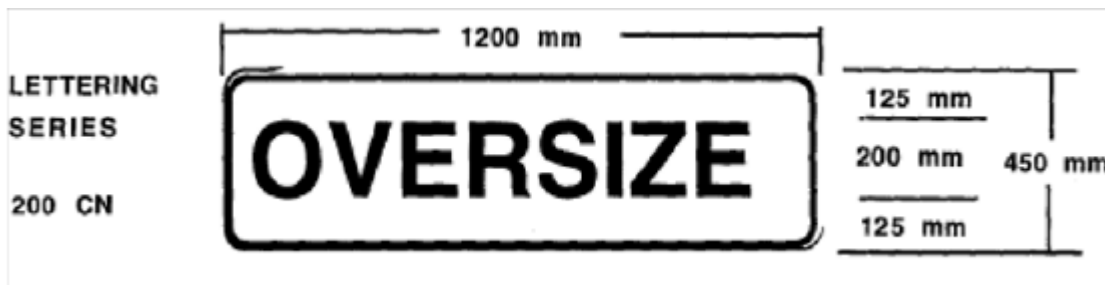
The letters must be—

- at least 200mm high; and
- at least 125mm from the top and bottom of the warning sign.

If the length of the warning sign is split into 2 parts—

- the part fitted on the left must show the word ‘OVER’ and the part fitted on the right must show the word ‘SIZE’; and
- there must be no border between the 2 parts.

Example of a warning sign for an oversize vehicle or combination



7.10 Fitting warning sign – MDL Sch8, s47

A warning sign on a heavy vehicle must be fitted horizontally.

The lower edge of the warning sign must be—

- above the bottom of the bumper bar; or
- if there is no bumper bar—at least 500mm above ground level.

If the length of the warning sign is split into 2 parts, each part must be fitted at the same height as the other.

7.11 Other specifications for warning signs— MDL Sch8, s42

A warning sign on a Class 1 heavy vehicle or pilot vehicle must—

- a) be manufactured from a material appropriate to its intended use on the vehicle; and
- b) be fitted so that the sign is unlikely to become dislocated or furl; and
- c) be displayed so that the entire sign is clearly visible; and
- d) be maintained so that it can be easily read by other road users.

8 Pilot and escort vehicles

8.1 Requirements for a pilot vehicle – MDL Sch8, s26

A pilot vehicle must have at least 4 wheels and a GVM of—

- no more than 4.5t; unless
- if the pilot vehicle is the rear pilot vehicle of 2 pilot vehicles that are required to accompany a heavy vehicle—no more than 6.5t.

A pilot vehicle must have a warning sign attached to its roof only when it is in operation as a pilot vehicle.

A pilot vehicle must only have a warning light attached –

- above or below the warning sign; or
- at each side of the warning sign.

8.2 Size and shape of warning sign for pilot vehicle – MDL Sch8, s49

A warning sign on a pilot vehicle must be at least 1200mm long and at least 600mm high.

The warning sign may have bottom corner cut-outs not more than 150mm wide and not more than 100mm high if they are needed for fitting the warning sign to the pilot vehicle.

8.3 Faces of warning sign for pilot vehicle – MDL Sch8, s50

Both faces of a warning sign on a pilot vehicle must show—

- the word 'OVERSIZE', in black capital letters at least 200mm high, and complying with AS 1744 'Forms of Letters and Numerals for Road Signs', in typeface Series C(N); and
- the words 'LOAD AHEAD', in black capital letters at least 100mm high, and complying with AS 1744 'Forms of Letters and Numerals for Road Signs', in typeface Series D(N).

Note: AS 1744 'Forms of Letters and Numerals for Road Signs' may be purchased from Standards Australia at <www.standards.org.au>.

The bottom of the letters of the word 'OVERSIZE' must be at least 300mm from the bottom of the warning sign.

The bottom of the letters of the words 'LOAD AHEAD' must be at least 100mm from the bottom of the warning sign.

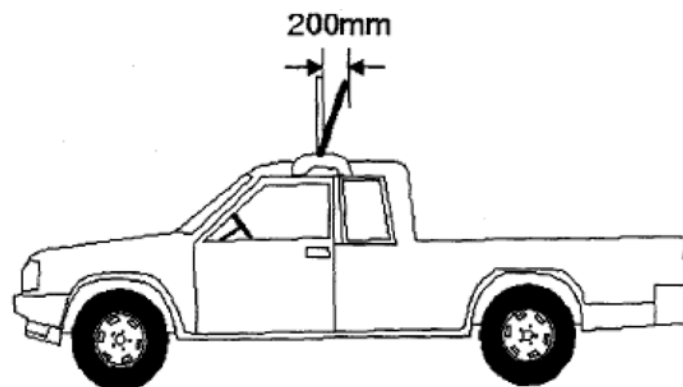
Example of a warning sign for a pilot vehicle



8.4 Fitting warning sign for pilot vehicle – MDL Sch8, s51

A warning sign on a pilot vehicle must not lean back so that there is more than 200mm measured horizontally from the top of the sign to a vertical line running through the bottom of the sign.

Example—



8.5 Requirements for an escort vehicle – MDL Sch8, s27

An escort vehicle must have—

- at least 4 wheels; and
- a GVM of 4.5t or less; and
- 1 or 2 warning lights on its roof.

If the vehicle is a police vehicle or transport enforcement vehicle, the warning light, instead of flashing yellow, may flash a colour that a light on the roof of an exempt vehicle is required or permitted to be under section 79 of Schedule 2 of the Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation.

This requirement does not apply to an escort vehicle that is a motor cycle driven by a police officer in the course of the officer's duty.

8.6 Headlights on a pilot or escort vehicle – MDL Sch8, s28

The low-beam headlights on a pilot vehicle or escort vehicle must be switched on when it is accompanying a heavy vehicle during the daytime.

8.7 Restriction on what a pilot or escort vehicle may carry – MDL Sch8, s29

A pilot vehicle or escort vehicle must not tow a trailer or carry goods, but it may carry equipment or substances for use in connection with the heavy vehicle it is accompanying or for restraining a load on that heavy vehicle.

8.8 Where a pilot vehicle must be driven – MDL Sch8, s30

If 1 pilot vehicle accompanies a heavy vehicle, the pilot vehicle must travel—

- behind the heavy vehicle if they are on a divided road; or
- in front of the heavy vehicle if they are on a road that is not divided.

If 2 pilot vehicles accompany a Class 1 heavy vehicle, 1 pilot vehicle must travel in front of the heavy vehicle, and the other behind it.

A pilot vehicle must travel far enough away from the Class 1 heavy vehicle it is accompanying to give adequate warning to other road users of the presence of the heavy vehicle, taking into account traffic speed, weather, visibility and other driving conditions.

8.9 Communication between drivers – MDL Sch8, s31

A Class 1 heavy vehicle and any accompanying pilot vehicle or escort vehicle must have a device that allows the drivers to communicate effectively with each other.

Note: The device cannot be a mobile telephone.

9 Oversize /overmass load carrying heavy vehicles

9.1 Carrying goods in addition to a large indivisible item – MDL Sch8, s13

9.1.1 A load-carrying vehicle must not carry more than 1 large indivisible item unless—

- the vehicle together with its load complies with the general mass limits; and
- the carriage of an additional item does not cause the vehicle together with its load to exceed a prescribed dimension requirement that would not be exceeded if the vehicle carried only one indivisible item.

9.1.2 A load-carrying vehicle carrying 1 or more large indivisible items must not carry any other goods unless—

- the vehicle together with its load complies with the general mass limits; and
- the other goods are contained within the limits set by the prescribed dimension requirements.

9.1.3 Despite 9.1.2, a load-carrying vehicle carrying a special purpose vehicle or agricultural vehicle may also carry equipment, tools, substances or detached parts to be used in conjunction with the vehicle being carried.

10 Special purpose vehicles

10.1 Side lights for travel at night with long front projections – MDL Sch8, s16

8.1.1 When travelling at night, a special purpose vehicle with a projection extending more than 1.2m in front of the body of the vehicle must have a yellow light fixed on each side of the projection.

8.1.2 The light must be—

- fixed as far forward as possible, and shielded from the driver's view; and
- visible to any traffic approaching the vehicle from its front; and
- visible to any traffic approaching the vehicle from the side on which it is fixed.

10.2 Rear marking plates and warning patterns – MDL Sch8, s17

A rear marking plate must be fitted to the rearmost part of the body of a special purpose vehicle.

A warning pattern must be displayed on the left and right sides of any rigid projection extending more than 1.2m in front of the body of a special purpose vehicle.

10.3 Prohibition on towing other vehicles – MDL Sch8, s18/33

10.3.1 A special purpose vehicle must not tow a vehicle.

10.3.2 10.3.1 does not apply to a crane towing a single trailer when operating under a mass or dimension exemption (permit) if-

- the crane has no more than 5 axles; and
- the load on the trailer includes only equipment required for the normal operation of the crane; and
- the swept path of the combination consisting of the crane and trailer turning a corner is not greater than what the swept path of the crane alone turning a corner would be.