

# Vehicle Standards Guide 2 (VSG-2)

## Changes to the Heavy Vehicle Safety Standards

Revised December 2024

This guide provides advice to the heavy vehicle industry about changes made to the heavy vehicle safety standards on 12 April 2024.

### Introduction

To ensure that the *Heavy Vehicle National Law* (the Law), and the *Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation* (the Regulation) are kept current, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) regularly undertakes reviews and makes changes when needed.

Following a recent review, changes made to vehicle safety standards requirements in the Law and the Regulation commenced 12 April 2024.

### Summary of changes

Changes made to the technical requirements of the vehicle safety standards, set out in the Regulation, included:

- implementation of the *Road Vehicle Standards Act*
- safer freight vehicle width measurement.

### Road Vehicle Standards Act

Schedule 1 and 3 have been amended to refer to the *Road Vehicle Standard Rules* as required by the implementation of the *Road Vehicle Standards Act*.

### Safer Freight Vehicles

From 12 April 2024, the measurement of width of vehicles has changed to reflect the introduction of safer freight vehicles with a maximum width of 2.55m.

- [VSG36 - Vehicle width](https://www.nhvr.gov.au/document/461/) <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/document/461/> contains information on how width is measured for Safer Freight Vehicles.

### National Heavy Vehicle Inspection Manual

The National Heavy Vehicle Inspection Manual 3.1 (NHVIM 3.1) has now been published and includes the above legislative amendments.

For more information about the review of the manual visit [www.nhvr.gov.au/nhvim](https://www.nhvr.gov.au/nhvim).

### Chain of Responsibility

The primary duty requires [Chain of Responsibility](#) parties to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that they carry out their transport activities in a way that ensures public safety when heavy vehicles are used on a road.

Keeping up-to-date with vehicle standards, and implementing them in your fleet is part of your transport activities.

### Complying with the Heavy Vehicle National Law

The operator of a heavy vehicle must ensure their vehicle complies with the *Australian Design Rules* (ADRs) and the National Regulation. Using or permitting another person to use a defective heavy vehicle on a road is an offence.

A defective heavy vehicle is a vehicle that:

- does not comply with the heavy vehicle safety standards; or
- has a part that does not perform its intended function; or
- has deteriorated to an extent that it cannot be reasonably relied on to perform its intended function.

Penalties can include on-the-spot fines or prosecution. Formal warnings or a defect notice may also be issued. More information can be found at [Heavy vehicle defects - https://www.nhvr.gov.au/hv-defects](https://www.nhvr.gov.au/hv-defects).

#### For more information:

Visit: [www.nhvr.gov.au/vehiclestandards](https://www.nhvr.gov.au/vehiclestandards)  
Subscribe: [www.nhvr.gov.au/subscribe](https://www.nhvr.gov.au/subscribe)  
Email: [vehiclestandards@nhvr.gov.au](mailto:vehiclestandards@nhvr.gov.au)  
Phone: 13 NHVR (13 64 87)\*

\*Standard 13 call charges apply. Please check with your phone provider.  
© Copyright National Heavy Vehicle Regulator 2024, [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/au](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/au)  
Disclaimer: This information is only a guide and should not be relied upon as legal advice.

<b>VSG2: Revision history</b>		
<b>First Published</b>	<b>Feb2016</b>	
Revised	July 2017	<i>Major review</i>
Revised	July 2018	<i>Major review</i>
Revised	Nov 2019	<i>Major review</i>
Revised	Nov 2019	<i>Minor amendment</i>
Revised	Jan 2020	<i>Major review</i>
Revised	Feb 2021	<i>Major review</i>
Revised	Dec 2024	<i>Major review</i>