

Cotton trailer extensions

This information sheet provides information about the [Multi-State Class 3 Heavy Vehicle \(Cotton Transportation\) Dimension Exemption Notice 2022 \(No 1\)](#).

Purpose of the Notice

The Notice exempts Type 1 road train combinations in Queensland and New South Wales from prescribed dimension requirements when engaged in transporting round cotton modules **between cotton farms and cotton gins** on an approved route.

Note: A Type 1 road train means a road train consisting of a prime mover hauling unit towing two trailers connected by a converter dolly, when the combination length is no longer than 36.5m.

The Notice allows for longer dimensions to the first and second trailers by fitting removable extensions designed to carry an extra round cotton module on each trailer.

Dimension and signage conditions

First trailer

When adding an extension at the rear of the first trailer, the total length of the trailer must not exceed the dimensions shown in Figure 1 below.

The overall distance from the first point of articulation to the rearmost point of the trailer (including the coupling, if applicable) must not exceed 12.75m.

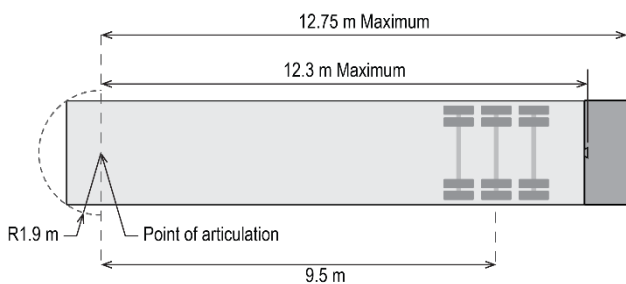


Figure 1: First trailer extension

Where the coupling is located forward of the rear of the vehicle, the distance between the point of articulation and the rear of the vehicle can be up to 0.75m (as shown in Figure 2).



Figure 2: First trailer coupling

Second trailer

The second trailer can have a removable extension to carry an extra cotton bale. The extension is limited to the dimensions shown in Figure 3.

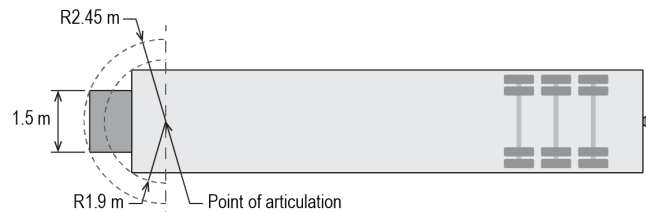


Figure 3: Second trailer extension

Width

The trailers must not exceed 2.5m in width when loaded.

Signage

Road trains must comply with the signage requirements stated in the [Heavy Vehicle \(Vehicle Standards\) National Regulation](#) and all other requirements in the [National Class 2 Road Train Authorisation Notice](#).

Approved vehicle modifications

Where an existing trailer is modified by adding an extension accommodating an additional round cotton module, assessment and approval from an Approved Vehicle Examiner (AVE) are required.

Modifications made to the chassis, body or tow couplings require appropriate assessment and certification. This includes changes made to accommodate a removable extension.

When designing or constructing a trailer extension, the NHVR strongly recommends engaging the services of an appropriately qualified engineer, tradesperson or AVE to ensure that any work carried out is done in accordance with [Vehicle Standards Bulletin 6 \(VSB6\): National Code of Practice for Heavy Vehicle Modifications](#).

Operation by state

An eligible vehicle operating under this Notice travelling between cotton farms and cotton gins may access the following networks located at <https://maps.nhvr.gov.au>.

Queensland

In Queensland, an eligible vehicle may access the:

- RT1 route (Road Train Type 1 network) (previously RT1 - PBS 3A).

New South Wales

In New South Wales, an eligible vehicle may access the:

- GML & CML Type 1 A-double Network (previously GML Type 1 A-double Network)
- HML Type 1 A-double Network.

Note: The network names published on the National Network map differ slightly from the network names used in the Notice.

FAQs

Can I use these trailers in a semitrailer configuration?

No, the dimension exemptions are only applicable when operating as a Type 1 road train configuration on an approved route.

Can I travel unladen with the trailer modification in the extended position?

Yes, but the extension must be restrained in a way that complies with the loading requirements listed in the [Heavy Vehicle \(Mass, Dimension, and Loading\) National Regulation](#).

The extension must be minimised as far as practicable when travelling unladen.

Can road managers set time restrictions and apply other conditions to permits?

Road managers can set travel conditions (times and direction of travel) and road conditions. They may also request vehicle conditions; however, the NHVR needs to agree to them.

What if I need a third-party approval for a permit?

You will need to secure all other applicable approvals from electricity companies, rail authorities and other third parties as part of the application process, before your permit can be issued.

Can I use this Notice in other states and territories?

No, it only applies in Queensland and New South Wales.

How do I access roads not authorised by the Notice?

If you want to access roads not listed in the Notice, you must apply to the NHVR for a permit.

How do I apply for a permit?

To apply for new a permit:

Go to <https://www.service.nhvr.gov.au>. If you are not already registered, follow the prompts to set up an account.

1. Once registered, from the home screen, click on the *Application tracker*.
2. Click on the *New Application* button (on the right) and enter a reference for your application.
3. Click on the green *Select Configuration* button and then click on the heading *Road Train (Inc. HML)*.
4. Select the image that represents *A-doubles* at the top of the list.
5. The radio button *Class 2 – A-doubles* will already be selected. Click on *Height – Up to 4.3m*, then *Length – Up to 36.5m (Type 1)*.
6. In the *Freight* section, click on the radio button for *Commodity*, then type in the *Description of load – Cotton Bales*.
7. Add *Cotton Trailer Extension* in the Route notes section.
8. On the *Travel Details* page, you will be prompted to enter the required permit period.
9. On the *Route/area details page*, click the *Route Type – Single Route* radio button, then enter your route ID. If you don't have a route ID, click on the *Create New Route* button and follow the prompts to create your journey.
10. Select the *Confirm* tab and, under the *Route notes* heading, type in *Cotton Trailer Extension Permit Scheme*.
11. Follow the prompts to complete the application, confirm your contact details and complete payment for your application.

Information for AVEs certifying cotton trailers

An eligible vehicle fitted with extensions only requires modification approvals pertaining to the chassis and/or body attachment points supporting the extensions.

The extensions must be fitted to a complying road train trailer and, as such, are considered as a load restraint device. Therefore, no vehicle standards exemption is required for overall length of the trailer.

Assessing whether the vehicle requires certification

Any modifications, such as adding attachment points, or making any change to the vehicle that results in the vehicle departing from the manufacturer's specifications, must be carried out in accordance with [VSB6](#).

Typically, modifications made to trailers to operate under this Notice include changes to the chassis (Section H), the body (Section J) or the coupling (Section P).

To assist AVEs to identify modifications that may require assessment and certification, the following examples have been developed to cover some of the common methods for fitting a cotton bale extension.

More detailed information can be found at: <http://www.nhvr.gov.au/vsb6>

Chassis

VSB6 Modification Code H5 *Trailer Chassis Modifications* provides for changes or modifications made to a trailer's chassis. When fitting a cotton bale extension, the types of modification that may require approvals under this code include:

- adding attachment point to the chassis
- extending or reducing the trailer's chassis
- drilling the chassis to allow the extension to be fitted
- welding on any part of the chassis
- installing a cross member.

Body mounting

VSB6 Modification Code J1 *Body Mounting* provides for the mounting of a body to a vehicle, and ensures the mounting method is appropriate for the body type and the load is evenly transferred into the vehicle. When fitting a cotton bale extension, replacement of body mountings may require approvals under this code.

If the cotton bale extension is fitted to the existing body of a trailer, the AVE should review the design of the existing body mounts to ensure they remain suitable.

When an extension is installed, it may result in higher or different patterns of loading through the body, so the mounts may need to be modified or new mounts added to ensure the body mounting still complies with VSB6 Modification Code J1.

Coupling

VSB6 Modification Code P1 *Towbar and coupling installation other than fifth wheels and kingpins* provides for the mounting of a coupling component to a vehicle.

When fitting a cotton bale extension, the AVE should check the requirements of this code to ensure the vehicle, as modified, continues to comply with all the relevant requirements for couplings, especially those relating to dimensions and location of the coupling.

General requirements

In addition to the specific modification requirements listed above, AVEs should also:

- Check there is sufficient clearance between the first and second trailer so that no parts of the load or combination (other than electrical, hydraulic or mechanical couplings) can contact each other under all operating conditions.
- Clearly identify this Notice in their modification certificate/report.
- Advise the customer that the certificate/report should stay with the vehicle so that compliance with the Notice can be proved.
- Keep a copy of their Notice with their records for certifying the vehicle.

For further information, please contact the NHVR's Vehicle Standards team at vehiclestandards@nhvr.gov.au.

For more information:

Visit: www.nhvr.gov.au
 Subscribe: www.nhvr.gov.au/subscribe
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