



Office of Legislative Drafting, Attorney-General's Department.

Statutory Rules 1995 No.

Road Transport Reform (Mass and Loading) Regulations

NOTE

The purpose of these Regulations is to help manage road wear and the risk that vehicles and their loads may pose to road users.

The Regulations are intended to match load limits on vehicles with the current capacity of roads and bridges.

The Regulations therefore impose mass limits for vehicles and combinations, including their loads, as well as mass limits for individual tyres, wheels, axles and axle groups. The Regulations also impose rules about the size of a load, how far it may project from the vehicle, warning signals for certain projections, and securing loads.

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owner



Road Transport Reform (Mass and Loading) Regulations

I, THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL of the Commonwealth of Australia, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council, make the following Regulations under the *Road Transport Reform (Vehicles and Traffic) Act 1993*.

Dated

1995.

Governor-General

LAURIE BRERETON

By His Excellency's Command,

Minister for Transport

Title

1 These Regulations may be cited as the Road Transport Reform (Mass and Loading) Regulations.

Commencement

- **2 (1)** Regulations 1 and 2 commence on the day on which the making of these Regulations is notified in the *Gazette*.
- 2 (2) The remaining provisions of these Regulations commence on a day or days specified by the Commonwealth Minister by notice in the *Gazette*.

Purpose

- 3 (1) The purpose of these Regulations is to provide a set of nationally uniform or consistent requirements relating to the mass and loading of vehicles and combinations, to:
 - (a) increase road safety; and
 - (b) increase the efficiency and reduce the administrative costs of road transport; and
 - (c) reduce the damage that excessively loaded vehicles and combinations cause to roads and related structures, including bridges.

Interpretation

- 4 (1) In these Regulations:
 - "Commonwealth Minister" means the Minister of the Commonwealth administering the Act;
 - "the Act" means the Road Transport Reform (Vehicles and Traffic) Act 1993.
- 4 (2) Words and phrases defined in the Schedule have the same meanings in the regulations appearing before the Schedule.
- 4 (3) A note does not form part of these Regulations.
- 4 (4) A diagram appearing in these Regulations is illustrative only.

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Application of the mass and loading requirements

- 5 (1) The Schedule applies to:
 - (a) a vehicle with a GVM exceeding 4.5 tonnes; and
 - (b) a combination that includes a vehicle with a GVM exceeding 4.5 tonnes; and
 - (c) a load on a vehicle described in paragraph (a) or on a combination described in paragraph (b).
- 5 (2) The Schedule applies only in the following places:
 - (a) a road;
 - (b) an area that divides a road;
 - (c) a footpath or nature strip adjacent to a road;
 - (d) an area that is not a road and that is open to or used by the public for driving or parking vehicles;
 - (e) an area that is open to or used by the public and has been declared in accordance with section 16 of the Act to be an area to which these Regulations apply.
- 5 (3) The Schedule does not apply to a vehicle or combination that is used only on a railway or tramway, or its load.

NOTE

Under section 15 of the Act, the Minister can, by notice in the Government Gazette, suspend the operation of all or part of these Regulations for a specified period, or vary them. A requirement in the Schedule does not apply to the extent that it is suspended or varied under the Act.

Compliance with requirements: motor vehicles

- 6 (1) If a motor vehicle or a load on a motor vehicle does not comply with a requirement in the Schedule that applies to it, each of the following persons is guilty of an offence:
 - (a) the owner of the motor vehicle;
 - (b) the driver of the motor vehicle.

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- 6 (2) A person who is both the owner and the driver of the motor vehicle may be punished only once for the same failure of the vehicle or load to comply with a requirement.

Compliance with requirements: trailers

- 7 (1) If a trailer or a load on a trailer does not comply with a requirement in the Schedule that applies to it, each of the following persons is guilty of an offence:
 - (a) the owner of the trailer;
 - (b) the owner of any motor vehicle towing the trailer;
 - (c) the driver of any motor vehicle towing the trailer.
- 7 (2) A person who meets more than one of the descriptions in paragraphs (1) (a), (b) and (c) may be punished only once for the same failure of the trailer or load to comply with a requirement.

Compliance with requirements: combinations

- 8 (1) If a combination fails to comply with a requirement in the Schedule that applies to it, each of the following persons is guilty of an offence:
 - (a) the owner of the motor vehicle included in the combination:
 - (b) the driver of the motor vehicle included in the combination:
 - (c) the owner of a trailer included in the combination.
- 8 (2) A person who meets more than one of the descriptions in paragraphs (1) (a), (b) and (c) may be punished only once for the same failure of the combination to comply with a requirement.

Proof of loading offences

- 9 (1) In proceedings for a failure to comply with subclause 3.1 (1), (2) or (3) of the Schedule (relating to loading a vehicle), it is sufficient for the prosecution to prove that the load on the vehicle was not placed, secured or restrained (as the case requires) in a way that met the performance standards recommended in the Load Restraint Guide:
 - (a) published by the Australian Government Publishing Service on 12 December 1994; and
 - (b) available from Commonwealth Government Bookshops.
- 9 (2) In proceedings for a failure to comply with clause 3.1 of the Schedule, a document purporting to be the *Load Restraint Guide* referred to in subclause (1) must be taken to be the *Load Restraint Guide*, unless the document is proved not to be the *Load Restraint Guide*.
- 9 (3) If the prosecution in proceedings for a failure to comply with subclause 3.1 (2) of the Schedule (relating to securing a load on a vehicle) proves that the load, or part of the load, had fallen off the vehicle, the burden of proof is on the defendant to show compliance.

Penalty for an offence

- 10 (1) A person convicted of an offence under regulation 6, 7 or 8 for a failure to comply with a requirement in Part 1 of the Schedule is liable to a penalty not exceeding \$3,000 for an individual or \$15,000 for a body corporate.
- 10 (2) A person convicted of an offence under regulation 6, 7 or 8 for a failure to comply with a requirement in Part 2 or 3 of the Schedule is liable to a penalty not exceeding \$2,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for a body corporate.

Multiple offences

11 (1) A person who is convicted of an offence in relation to a vehicle or a combination that fails to comply with a requirement in the Schedule may be convicted of another offence if different parts of the vehicle or combination simultaneously fail to comply with the same requirement in the Schedule.

SCHEDULE

Regulation 5

MASS AND LOADING REQUIREMENTS

PART 1—MASS LIMITS

Mass limit for a single vehicle

1.1 (1) The total mass of a vehicle and any load must not exceed the vehicle's GVM.

Mass limits for tyres, wheels and axles

- 1.2 (1) The mass on a wheel or axle must not exceed the limit set by its manufacturer.
- 1.2 (2) The mass on a tyre must not exceed the greatest load capacity determined for the tyre by the manufacturer at a cold inflation pressure that does not exceed:
 - (a) 2 825 kilopascals for a radial ply tyre; or
 - (b) 700 kilopascals for any other tyre.
- 1.2 (3) The mass on an axle group or single axle must not exceed the limit provided for it in Table 1.
- 1.2 (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.
- 1.2 (5) A retractable axle is part of an axle group for the purposes of Table 1 if, when the mass on the group exceeds:
 - (a) 6 tonnes, in the case of a tandem axle group; or
 - (b) 11 tonnes, in the case of a tri-axle group.

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.

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SCHEDULE—continued

1.2 (6) The sum of the mass on the axle groups and single axles 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 AND AXLE GROUPS

Description of single axle or axle group	Mass Limit (tonnes)	
Single axles and single axle groups		
Single steer axle on a motor vehicle	6.0	
Single axle or single axle group fitted with single tyres with section width of: (a) less than 375 mm (b) at least 375 mm but less than 450 mm (c) at least 450 mm Single axle or single axle group fitted with dual tyres on:	6.0 6.7 7.0	
 (a) a pig trailer (b) a bus licensed to carry standing passengers (c) any other vehicle 	8.5 10.0 9.0	
Twinsteer axle groups		
Twinsteer axle group without a load-sharing suspension system	10.0	
Twinsteer axle group with a load-sharing suspension system	11.0	

Table 1—continued

MASS LIMITS FOR SINGLE AXLES AND AXLE GROUPS

Description of single axle or axle group	Mass Limit (tonnes)
Tandem axle groups	
Tandem axle group fitted with single tyres with section width of:	
(a) less than 375 mm (b) at least 375 mm but less than 450 mm (c) at least 450 mm	11.0 13.3 14.0
Tandem axle group fitted with single tyres on one axle and dual tyres on the other axle	13.0
Tandem axle group fitted with dual tyres on: (a) a pig trailer (b) any other vehicle 	15.0 16.5
Tri-axle groups	
Tri-axle group on a vehicle fitted with single tyres with section width of less than 375 mm on all axles, or single tyres on 1 or 2 axles and dual tyres on the other axle or axles	15.0
Tri-axle group on a pig trailer with either single tyres with section width of at least 375 mm, dual tyres on all axles, or a combination of those tyres	18.0
Tri-axle group, on a vehicle other than a pig trailer, with either single tyres with section width of at least 375 mm, dual tyres, or a combination of those tyres	20.0

Table 1—continued

MASS LIMITS FOR SINGLE AXLES AND AXLE GROUPS

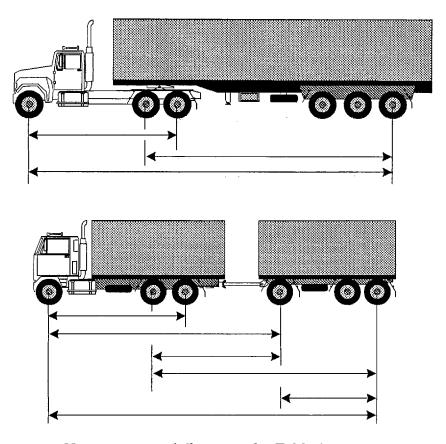
Description of single axle or axle group	Mass Limit (tonnes)
Quad-axle groups	
Quad-axle group fitted with single tyres with section width of less than 375 mm	15.0
Quad-axle group fitted with single tyres with section width of at least 375 mm or dual tyres	20.0

NOTE

Subclause 4.2 (1) of the Schedule to the Road Transport Reform (Heavy Vehicle Standards) Regulations requires axles in all axle groups except twinsteer axle groups to relate to each other through a load-sharing suspension system.

Mass limits relating to axle spacing

- 1.3(1) If the total mass of a vehicle or a combination, and any load, cannot lawfully exceed 42.5 tonnes, 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.
- Each distance in the Table refers to: 1.3 (2)
 - the distance from the centre of any single axle to the centre of any other single axle; or
 - the distance from the centre of any single axle to (b) the centre of the furthest axle in any axle group; or
 - the greatest distance between the centres of axles (c) in any 2 axle groups.



Measurement of distances for Table 2

- The mass limits in Table 2 apply to the sum of the mass 1.3 (3) on each axle group or single axle in the distance referred to in the Table, including the axles between which the distance is measured.
- 1.3 (4) The total mass of a vehicle or a combination, and any load, must not exceed 15 tonnes if the distance between any 2 axles that are not part of the same axle group is less than 2.5 metres.

Table 2
MASS LIMITS RELATING TO AXLE SPACING

Distance (metres)		Mass limit (tonnes)
exceeding	not exceeding	9
0	3.7	23.0
3.7	3.8	23.5
3.8	4.0	24.0
4.0	4.2	24.5
4.2	4.3	25.0
4.3	4.5	25.5
4.5	4.7	26.0
4.7	4.8	26.5
4.8	5.0	27.0
5.0	5.2	27.5
5.2	5.3	28.0
5.3	5.5	28.5
5.5	5.7	29.0
5.7	5.8	29.5
5.8	6.0	30.0
6.0	6.2	30.5
6.2	6.3	31.0
6.3	6.5	31.5
6.5	6.7	32.0
6.7	6.8	32.5
6.8	7.0	33.0
7.0	7.2	33.5
7.2	7.3	34.0
7.3	7.5	34.5
7.2 7.3 7.5	7.7	35.0
7.7	7.8	35.5
7.8	8.0	36.0
8.0	8.2	36.5
8.2	8.3	37.0

Table 2—continued

Distance (metres)		Mass limit (tonnes)
ceeding	not exceeding	
8.3	8.5	37.5
8.5	8.7	38.0
8.7	8.8	38.5
8.8	9.0	39.0
9.0	9.2	39.5
9.2	9.3	40.0
9.3	9.5	40.5
9.5	9.7	41.0
9.7	9.8	41.5
9.8	10.0	42.0
10.0		42.5
	(metres) 2	(metres) ceeding not exceeding 8.3 8.5 8.5 8.7 8.7 8.8 8.8 9.0 9.0 9.2 9.2 9.3 9.3 9.5 9.5 9.7 9.7 9.8 9.8 10.0

Mass limits for combinations

- 1.4 (1) The total mass of a combination other than a road train or B-double, and any load, must not exceed 42.5 tonnes.
- 1.4 (2) The loaded mass of a dog trailer or pig trailer must not exceed the loaded mass of the towing vehicle.
- 1.4 (3) The total mass of a combination, and any load, must not exceed the towing vehicle's GCM.

1.4 (4) If the manufacturer of a motor vehicle forming part of a road train or B-double has not determined the GCM of the vehicle, the total mass of the combination and any load must not exceed the number of kilograms worked out using the following formula:

Mass in kg =
$$\frac{K \times M \times R \times T}{16}$$

where:

K means:

- (a) 0.055 if a single drive axle is fitted to the motor vehicle; or
- (b) 0.053 if a single drive tandem axle group is fitted to the motor vehicle; or
- (c) 0.051 if a dual drive tandem axle group is fitted to the motor vehicle;

M means the number of tyre revolutions per kilometre as specified by the tyre manufacturer for the tyres fitted to the driving axle or axles;

R means the overall gear reduction between engine and drive wheels;

T means the maximum engine net torque in newton-metres.

PART 2—SIZE AND PROJECTION OF LOADS

Size limits

2.1 (1) A vehicle or a combination, and its load, must not exceed a size limit set for the vehicle or combination in the Road Transport Reform (Heavy Vehicle Standards) Regulations.

2.1 (2) The distance measured at right angles between the rear overhang line of a vehicle and the rear of any load it is carrying must not exceed the rear overhang that the vehicle is allowed under the Road Transport Reform (Heavy Vehicle Standards) Regulations.

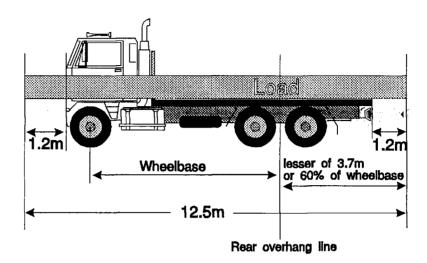
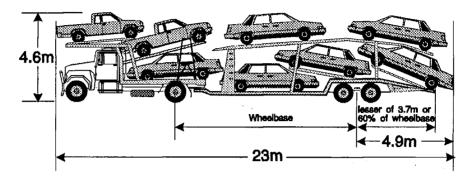


Illustration of:

- · front projection limit; and
- rear overhang limit from Road Transport Reform (Heavy Vehicle Standards) Regulations; and
- maximum rear projection of load allowed without a warning signal.
- **2.1** (3) In spite of subclauses (1) and (2):
 - (a) the height of a vehicle that is carrying vehicles on more than one deck, and its load, must not exceed 4.6 metres; and

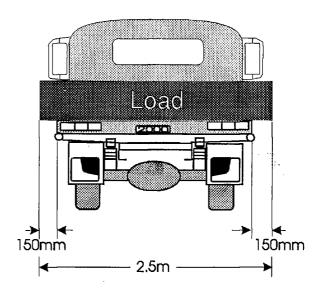
(b) the distance measured at right angles between the rear overhang line of a trailer carrying vehicles on more than one deck and the rear of the rearmost vehicle on the trailer must not exceed 4.9 metres?



Maximum allowable dimensions of a loaded car carrier

Front and side projections

A load on a vehicle must not project more than 1.2 2.2(1) metres in front of the vehicle, or more than 150 millimetres from the outermost part of either side of it.



Vehicle loaded to width limits referred to in subclause 2.1 (1), with maximum side projection of load allowed under subclause 2.2 (1)

NOTE

The combined dimensions of a vehicle and its load must still meet the requirements of clause 2.1 even if the load projects from the vehicle in any direction.

Rear projections

- 2.3 (1) The rear of a load on a vehicle must carry a warning signal if the load:
 - (a) projects more than 1.2 metres behind the vehicle;
 - (b) projects to the rear of the vehicle so that the end of the load cannot be seen easily from behind; or
 - (c) is on a pole-type trailer.

- 2.3 (2) In daytime, the warning signal must be a brightly coloured flag or piece of material, with each side at least 300 millimetres long.
- 2.3 (3) In the night-time, the warning signal must be a red light which can be seen for 200 metres.

Dangerous projections

2.4 (1) A load on a vehicle must not project in a way that is dangerous to a person or to property, even if all dimension and warning requirements are met.

PART 3—PLACING AND SECURING LOADS

Loading obligations

- 3.1 (1) A load on a vehicle must not be placed in a way that makes the vehicle unstable or unsafe.
- 3.1 (2) A load on a vehicle must be secured so that it is unlikely to fall or be dislodged from the vehicle.
- 3.1 (3) An appropriate method must be used to restrain the load on a vehicle.

Trailers

- 3.2 (1) A trailer in a combination must be securely coupled to the vehicle in front of it.
- 3.2 (2) The components of a coupling used between vehicles must be compatible and properly connected to each other.

PART 4—INTERPRETATION

NOTE

The following definitions appear in the Road Transport Reform (Vehicles and Traffic) Act 1993:

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

"road" means an area that is open to or used by the public and is developed for, or has as one of its main uses, the driving or riding of motor vehicles:

"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.

The terms have the same meaning in these Regulations as they have in the

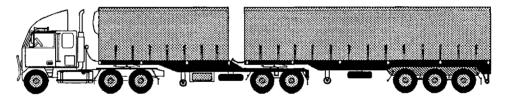
Definitions

In this Schedule: 4.1(1)

"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;

"axle group" means a single axle group, tandem axle group, twinsteer axle group, tri-axle group or quad-axle group;

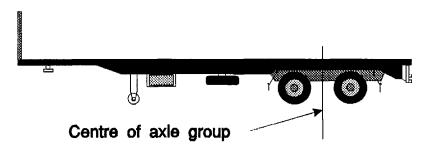
"B-double" means a combination consisting of a prime mover towing 2 semi-trailers;



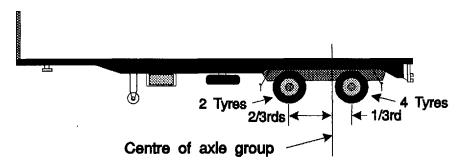
Typical B-double

"centre of an axle group" means:

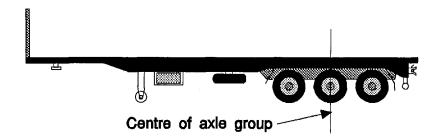
- (a) a line located midway between the centre-lines of the outermost axles of the group; or
- (b) if the group consists of 2 axles, one of which is fitted with twice the number of tyres as the other axle—a line located one third of the way from the centre-line of the axle with more tyres towards the centre-line of the axle with fewer tyres;



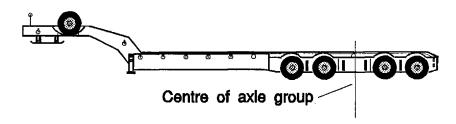
Centre of a typical tandem axle group fitted with an equal number of tyres on each axle



Centre of a typical tandem axle group fitted with a different number of tyres on each axle



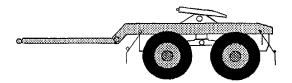
Centre of a typical tri-axle group



Centre of a typical quad-axle group

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

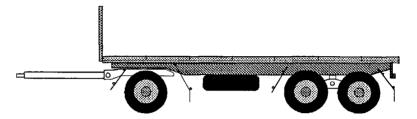
"converter dolly" means a trailer with one axle group or single axle and a fifth wheel coupling designed to convert a semi-trailer into a dog trailer;



Typical converter dolly

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

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



Typical dog trailer

"drawbar" means a part of a trailer (other than a semitrailer) 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;

"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;

"night-time" means the time beginning at sunset and ending at sunrise;

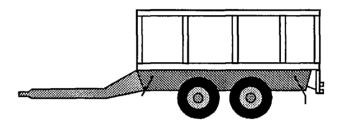
"owner", in relation to a vehicle, means:

- (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:

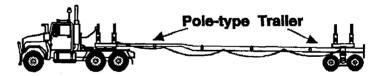
"pig trailer" means a trailer with one axle group or single axle near the middle of its load-carrying surface, and connected to the towing vehicle by a drawbar;



Typical pig trailer

"pole-type trailer" means a trailer that:

- (a) is attached to a towing vehicle by means of a pole or an attachment fitted to a pole; and
- (b) is ordinarily used for transporting loads, such as logs, pipes, structural members or other long objects, that are generally capable of supporting themselves like beams between supports;



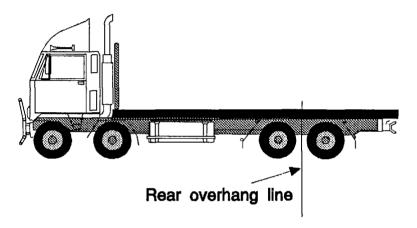
Typical pole-type trailer

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

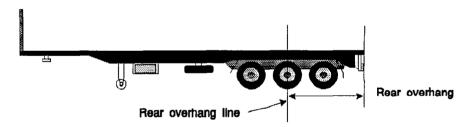
"quad-axle group" means a group of 4 axles, in which the horizontal distance between the centre-lines of the outermost axles is more than 3.2 metres but not more than 4.9 metres;

"rear overhang line" means:

- if there is a single axle at the rear of the vehicle the centre-line of the axle; or
- if there is an axle group at the rear of the vehicle—the centre of the axle group, determined (b) 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;



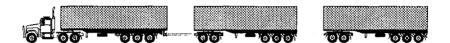
Rear overhang line on a typical motor vehicle that has an axle group



Rear overhang line on a typical semi-trailer

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

"road train" means a combination, other than a B-double, consisting of a motor vehicle towing at least 2 trailers (counting as one trailer a converter dolly supporting a semi-trailer);



Typical triple road train

"semi-trailer" means a trailer that has:

- (a) one axle group or single axle 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;

"single axle" means an axle not forming part of an axle group;

"single axle group" means a group of 2 or more axles, in which the horizontal distance between the centrelines of the outermost axles is less than 1 metre;

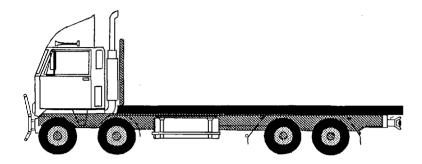
"tandem axle group" means a group of at least 2 axles, in which the horizontal distance between the centre-lines of the outermost axles is at least 1 metre, but not more than 2 metres:

"tri-axle group" means a group of at least 3 axles, in which the horizontal distance between the centre-lines of the outermost axles is more than 2 metres, but not more than 3.2 metres:

"twinsteer axle group" means a group of 2 axles:

- (a) with single tyres; and
- (b) fitted to a motor vehicle; and

- connected to the same steering mechanism; and (c)
- (d) the horizontal distance between whose centrelines is at least 1 metre, but not more than 2 metres:



Typical twinsteer axle group on a motor vehicle

"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:

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

NOTE

1. Notified in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette on

L 1995. 29 March