

Victoria's Platform Trailer Network

Information Sheet

August 2020



Introduction

Victoria's platform trailer network provides pre-approved permit access for a range of platform trailer configurations up to 176.0 tonnes on key corridors in Victoria. These networks and the configurations permitted on them have been developed in consultation with the heavy haulage industry.

Reference vehicles

Four platform trailer maps have been assessed against the following reference vehicles.

Table 1. Platform trailer reference vehicles

Reference Vehicle	Combination type	Maximum Mass limits
1	Prime mover & 6x8 platform trailer	115.0 tonnes
2	Prime mover & 8x8 platform trailer	145.0 tonnes
3	Prime mover, 2x8 dolly & 7x8 platform trailer	161.0 tonnes
4	Prime mover, 2x8 dolly & 8x8 platform trailer	176.0 tonnes

Mass limits

Each map has an upper mass limit that cannot be exceeded. In addition, maximum axle group limits are contained in the Table 2.

Table 2. Maximum mass limits

Axle type	Maximum Mass limits
Steer axle ¹	6.5 tonnes
Drive group (no dolly)	18.5 tonnes
Tandem dolly (eight tyres)	31.0 tonnes
Drive group and tandem dolly	49.5 tonnes
Axle on platform trailer (eight tyres)	15.0 tonnes per line



¹ When operating at 6.5 tonnes, the steer axle must comply with the complying steer axle requirements specified in *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulations*.

Internal spacings

To operate at the above mass limits, spacings between each axle and axle group must comply with the Table 3.

Table 3. Internal spacings

Spacing type	Allowance
Last axle of the drive group to the first axle of the platform trailer	6.0m - 6.3m
Last axle of the drive group to the first axle of the tandem dolly	2.6m - 3.6m
Last axle of the tandem dolly to the first axle of the platform trailer	6.0m - 6.3m
Platform trailer spacing (between each axle):	1.8m - 1.83m
Ground Contact Width for a dolly	Minimum 4.0m
Ground Contact Width for the platform trailer	Minimum 4.2m

Axle spacings for each reference vehicle can be found in the Appendix 1.



Dimension limits

Maximum dimension limits for platform trailer combinations are contained in the Table 4.

Table 4. Maximum dimensions limits

Width	Height ²	Rear overhang	Deck height	Length
6.0m	6.0m	7.6m	1.2m	38.0m

² Maximum height limit is subject to vertical clearance on the network (for example overhead powerlines, structures and pedestrian bridges). Please refer to height clearance information on the website:

<https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/business-and-industry/heavy-vehicle-industry/heavy-vehicle-road-safety/height-clearance-on-roads>

What if my platform trailer exceeds the dimension limits?

Platform trailer combinations that exceed the dimension limits contained in the Table 4³ may operate on the approved network provided the transport company attaches a Transport Management Plan (TMP) as part of the permit application.

Road Manager consent on approved arterial roads will not be required where the TMP demonstrates, through a swept-path analysis, that the combination can safely navigate the route without the need to either remove road furniture or operate contra-flow, in the opposite direction to the traffic⁴. In instances where the height exceeds 6.0 metres, third party approval will be required (see [Third-party permissions](#)).

What if my platform trailer doesn't match one of the reference vehicles?

As per Table 2, if your combination falls within the maximum mass limit for one of the published networks, you may operate on that network provided you do not exceed the mass limits or internal spacings described in this document. Approved networks for such combinations are contained in Table 5.

Table 5. Approved networks for other combinations

If my combination is a...	I may operate on the...
5x8 platform trailer (100.0 tonnes)	115.0 tonne network
7x8 platform trailer (130.0 tonnes)	145.0 tonne network
6x8 platform trailer with dolly (146.0 tonnes)	161.0 tonne network

A structural assessment will be required before access can be granted if you:

- exceed the mass limits (for example, operate at more than 15.0 tonnes per line on the platform); or
- do not comply with the internal spacing requirements, including the 1.8 spacing on the platform; or
- exceed 176.0 tonnes GCM.

An assessment may incur costs, particularly if the platform exceeds more than 15.0 tonnes per line.

³ Aside from deck height which must be maintained at 1.2 metres.

⁴ For combinations that require the removal of road furniture or contra-flow travel, road manager consent will be required.

NHVR permits

A Class 1 single-trip permit issued for 12 months is required to access the pre-approved networks. To be clear, this permit allows for only one trip over a 12-month period. Operators who need to make multiple trips to a single destination will need to first contact the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator before they apply for a permit under this policy.

Applications should be made via the NHVR portal (see [How to apply](#)).

Travel conditions

Platform trailers are only permitted to travel in the periods specified in the Table 6.

Table 6. Permitted travel times

Road or area	Day	Up to 5.0m wide and/or 30.0m long	Over 5.0m wide and/or 30.0m long
Melbourne and Geelong urban area	Mon - Sat	9am-4pm 12am-6am	1am-5am
	Sunday & public holidays	12am-4pm	1am-5am
Rural area	Any day	Sunrise - Sunset	Sunrise - Sunset
Freeway ⁵	Any day (all times)	Except for the day of a holiday period	Except for the day before a holiday period

A 'holiday period' means a period of three or more consecutive days consisting of any of the following:

- a state-wide school holiday;
- a public holiday;
- a Saturday or a Sunday.

A 'public holiday' means any day ratified by the [State Government of Victoria as a Public Holiday](#).

A 'rural area' means an area of operation in Victoria other than the following:

- Colac Surf Coast area;
- Gippsland Ranges area;
- Melbourne and Geelong urban area;
- Mountainous area; and
- Otway area.

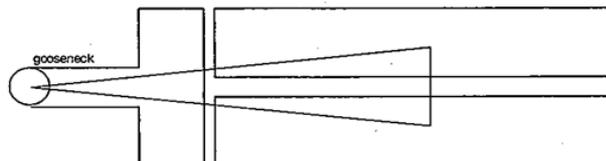
A platform trailer combination must not travel from 23 December to 3 January inclusive on:

- the Calder Highway; or
- the Hume Highway; or
- a freeway outside the Melbourne and Geelong urban areas.

⁵ Where a freeway transitions to a highway, the rural area travel conditions apply.

General operating conditions

- The platform trailer's suspension system must be capable of load-sharing across all axles.
- The coupling on a gooseneck connection must be height adjustable so that the platform can be made level prior to the commencement of travel.
- To maintain stability, platform trailers with a gooseneck are to be arranged in a three-point connection as shown below.



- If a gooseneck connection has a mass compensating mechanism, it must remain operational and maintain a constant mass on the tandem drive.
- To maintain traction when towing a laden trailer, the mass on the drive group must exceed 14.0 tonnes.
- The laden combination must not exceed a speed of 70km/h.
- A stand-by prime mover must accompany the combination when the total mass of the platform combination exceeds 150.0 tonnes.

A vehicle mounted variable message sign (VMS) is required when crossing any "orange" structure where a 5 km/h slowdown is stipulated.

Warning signs and flags

A platform trailer combination that, together with its load, is wider than 2.5 metres or longer than 25.0 metres 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
- four brightly coloured red, red and yellow, or yellow flags, each at least 450mm by 450mm, fixed as follows:
 - 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;
 - 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.

If a load projects more than 150mm beyond a side of a platform trailer, and the projection is less than 500mm thick from top to bottom, a warning light must be attached to the vehicle and two delineators must be attached in accordance with Schedule 8, Part 1 of the Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulations.

The warning sign and delineators must also meet the standards and specifications as set out in Schedule 8, Part 1 of the aforementioned regulations.



Warning lights

If a platform trailer, together with any load, is wider than 3.0 metres, a warning light must be attached to the vehicle while it is being used in the daytime.

The prime mover towing the platform trailer must have its low-beam headlights or front fog lights on while being used in daytime.

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

If a platform trailer is being used at night:

- side markers must be displayed, not more than 2.0 metres apart, along the total length of each side of the vehicle and any load projecting from the front or rear of the vehicle; and
- two 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 1.0 metre, but no more than 2.1 metres, above the ground; and
- a warning light must be attached to the combination if it, together with any load, is wider than 2.5 metres or longer than 22.0 metres; and
- a pilot vehicle is required when the platform is travelling unladen with a width greater than 3.1 metres, but not more than 3.5 metres.

Skid rails

Non-conductive skid rails, designed in accordance with electricity authority requirements, must be attached to the top of the load when the vehicle height exceeds:

- 4.8 metres under tram wires; and
- 5.0 metres under railway wires, electricity authority and telecommunication wires.

Pilot requirements

Pilots must comply with the pilot requirements set out in Schedule 8 of the Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulations.

A minimum of 2 certified pilots is required per load. Additional pilots may be required as per the Pilot and Escort Requirement Guide (see Appendix 2).

Third-party permissions

Where third-party permission is required, the driver of the prime mover/dolly/platform trailer combination must keep a copy of the approval (physical or electronic) to be shown to an authorised officer on request.

Crossing a railway or tramway track

Permission from the Department of Transport's Over Dimension Load team is required to cross railway or tramway tracks where the vehicle exceeds one of the dimensions contained in the Table 7.

Table 7. Dimension threshold to seek permission to cross tracks

	Width	Height	Length
Rail	3.0m	4.9m	26.0m
Tram	3.0m	4.3m	26.0m

Applications stating the dimensions and mass of the combination and the time of day of the journey must be sent to odlpermit@transport.vic.gov.au.

Applications can take up to five days to process.

For more information please contact the following numbers: (03) 8392 7720 / 0417 054 626.

Electricity or telecommunications corporations

Permission from electricity or telecommunication corporations is required for any load that exceeds a height of 5.0 metres travelling under electrical or phone wires.

Unladen travel

The Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulations specify that when operating unladen, a platform trailer must be kept at its smallest practicable dimensions. The above means unladen travel is restricted to prime mover and platform trailer combinations with the deck fully closed and any deck or gooseneck extensions retracted.

The dolly must be removed from the combination for unladen travel but may be carried as a load.

An unladen platform trailer combination cannot exceed the following maximum dimensions:

- Maximum length: 30.0 metres
- Maximum width: 3.5 metres
- Maximum height: 4.6 metres

The unladen platform trailer combination must not exceed the following mass limits:

- Steer axle: 6.5 tonnes
- Drive axle: 18.5 tonnes
- Eight-tyred axle: 5.0 tonnes per line

Unladen platform trailers that comply with the above may apply for annual permits to operate on [Victoria's Oversize & Overmass network](#).

General responsibilities

The Department's platform trailer maps do not absolve a driver or a transport company of their responsibilities.

Before the driver operates on the approved routes they must:

- show the details of their permit to any pilot escorting the load;
- ensure there is sufficient clearance under wires, structures and trees, and sufficient ground clearance at rail level crossings;
- check the VicTraffic map on the VicRoads' website to determine any road closures or additional road condition;
- ensure that the removal of any road furniture is not undertaken by the driver of the pilot or escort vehicle. It is the responsibility of the transport company to ensure road furniture is returned to the correct position once the move is complete.

How to Apply

To gain access for the network, an application for an Oversize/Overmass permit must be submitted via the NHVR Portal. A Class 1 single-trip permit will be issued for 12 months.

To apply for a new permit via the NHVR Portal:

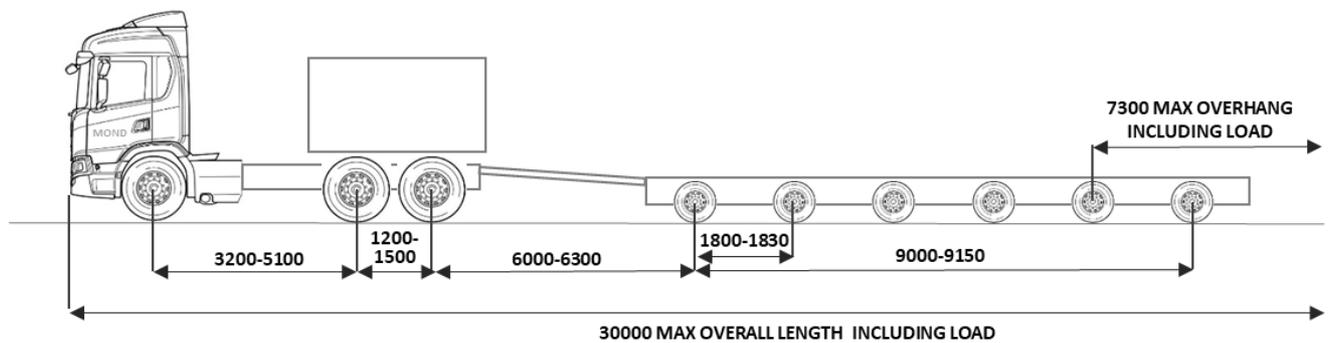
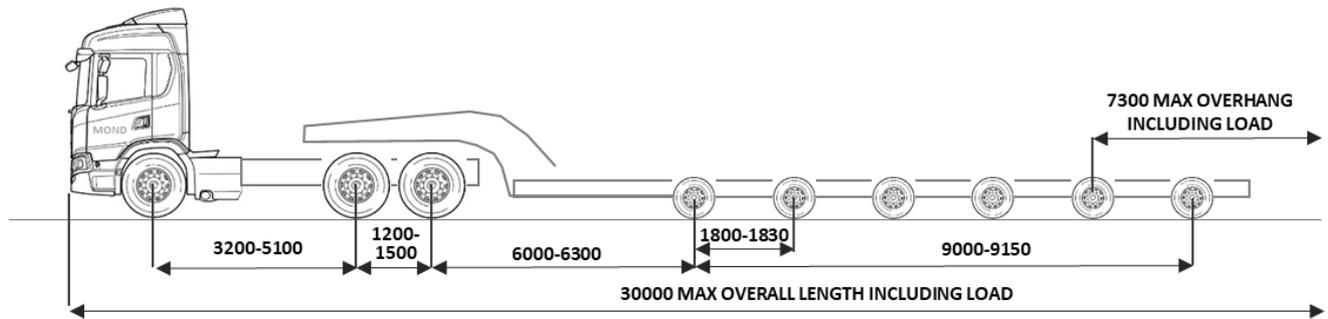
1. Go to <https://www.service.nhvr.gov.au> and if not already registered, follow the prompts to set up an account.
2. Once registered, from the home screen, click on the 'Application Tracker' tile.
3. Click on the 'New Application' button and enter a reference for your application.
4. Click on the green 'Select Configuration' button and then select the 'Oversize and/or Overmass (OSOM)' heading.
5. Select the 'Prime Mover towing OS/OM/OSOM Load', you will be required to remove the trailer component, and add the platform trailer to the application.
6. Complete all fields in the 'Vehicle' step of the application and then select the 'Next' button.
7. In the 'Travel details tab' under 'travel requirements' you will be required to select 'Single Trip'.
8. In the 'Route' step of the application, select the 'Single Route' option and plot the start and finish address you require, ensuring you utilise the roads identified on the platform trailer network.
9. Tick the confirmation box located under the 'Confirm' tab and add the following note into 'Route Notes' **'Requesting Access to roads contained in Victoria's Platform Trailer Network'**.
10. Navigate through the remainder of the application form, completing all mandatory information and attaching any supporting documentation. Follow the prompts to confirm your contact details and complete payment for your application.

Appendix 1

Platform Trailer Combination Reference Vehicle Designs⁶

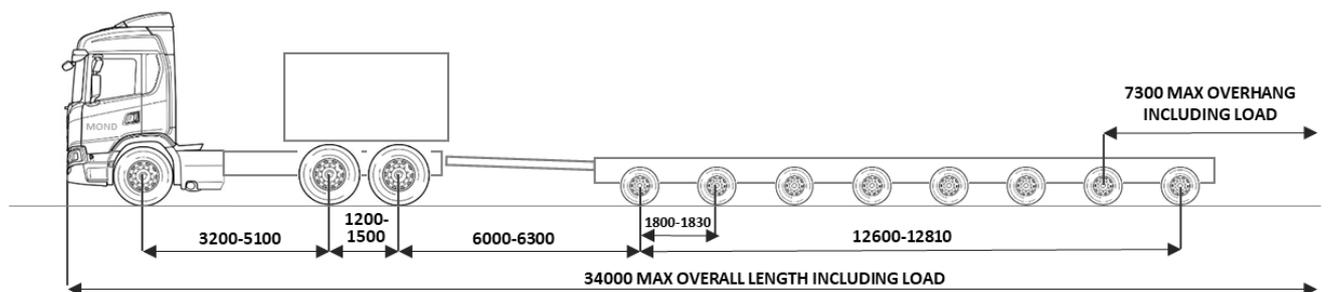
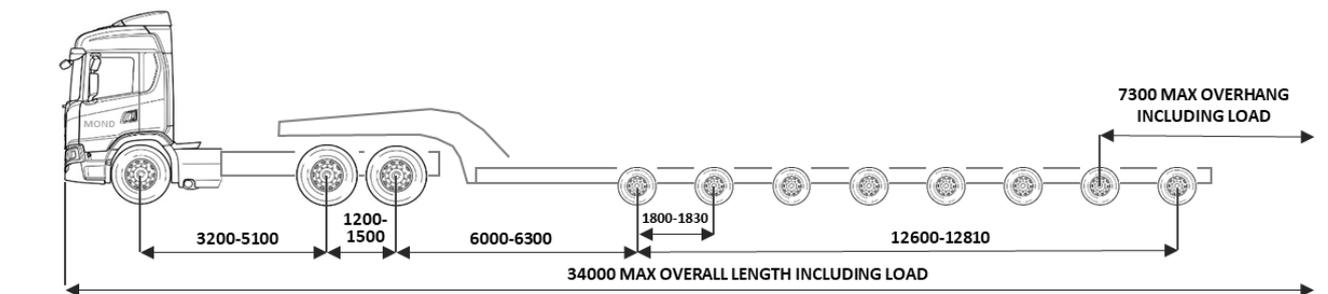
Reference vehicle 1:

Prime mover & 6x8 platform trailer combination up to 115.0 tonnes



Reference vehicle 2:

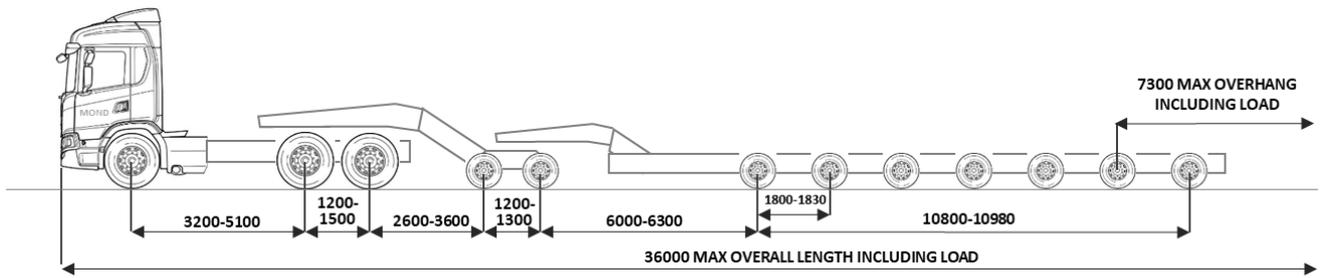
Prime mover & 8x8 platform trailer combination up to 145.0 tonnes



⁶ Not to scale. All measurements in millimetres.

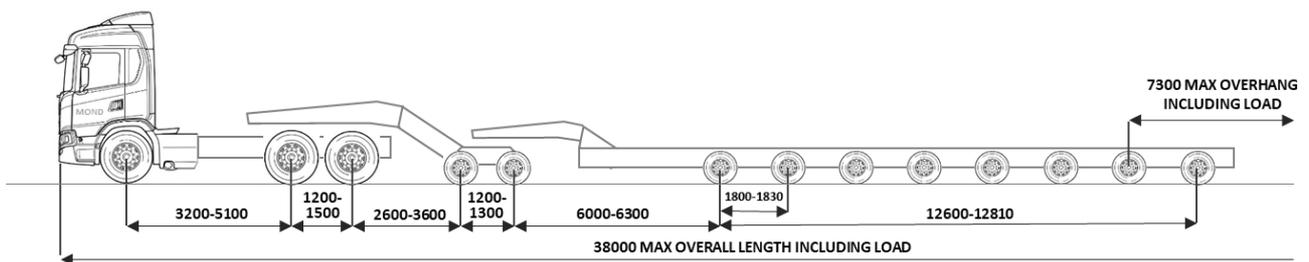
Reference vehicle 3:

Prime mover, 2x8 dolly and 7x8 platform trailer combination up to 161.0 tonnes



Reference vehicle 4:

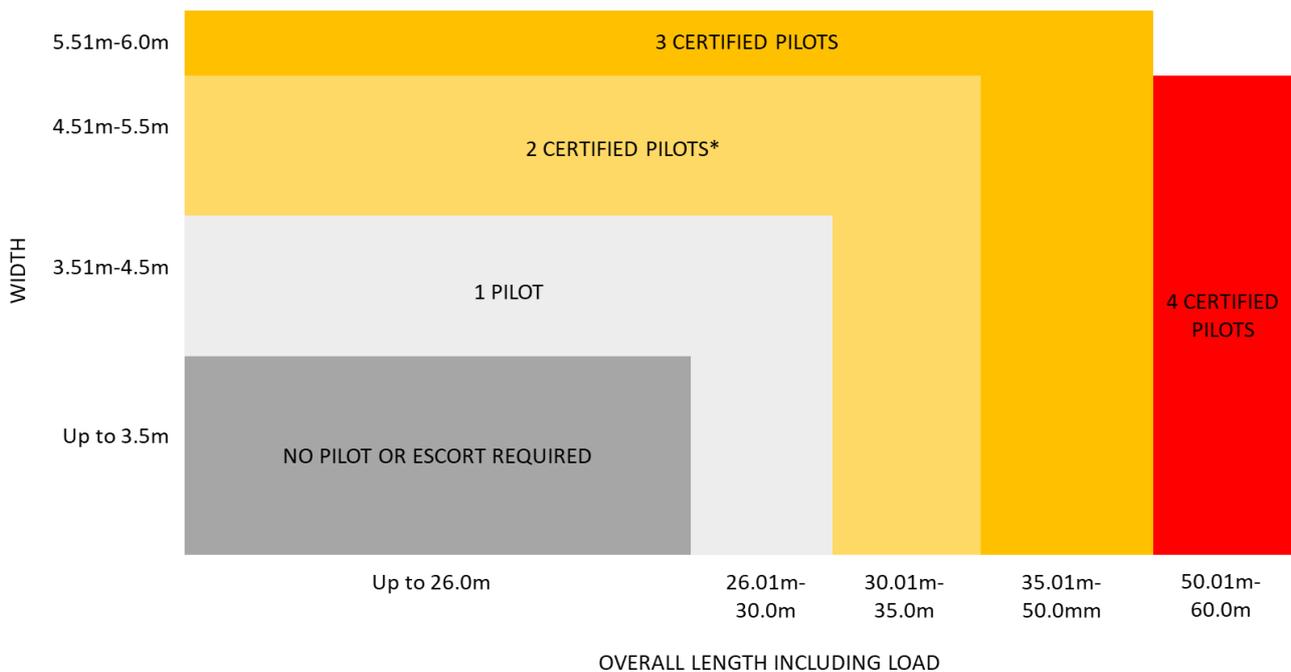
Prime mover, 2x8 dolly and 8x8 platform trailer combination up to 176.0 tonnes



Appendix 2

Pilot and Escort Requirement Guide

This is a guide only. May be amended to accommodate specific traffic conditions; specific road conditions; or loads larger than 6.0m wide or 60.0m long. The number of pilot/escort vehicles required will be considered on a case-by-case basis.



*Reduces to 1 certified pilot on a freeway outside the Melbourne and Geelong urban areas