

Victoria's road train network

Information Sheet

July 2021

Introduction

This information sheet is intended to equip heavy vehicle operators with the information they need to operate road trains in Victoria.

It should be read in conjunction with information supplied by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR).

Road trains operate on a network in the north west of Victoria either under the NHVR *National Class 2 Road Train Authorisation Notice 2020* or under a permit.

Gazette arrangements

The *National Class 2 Road Train Authorisation Notice 2020* fully harmonises access conditions across borders, including the axle-space mass schedule (also known as the bridge formula) contained in Schedule 1 of the *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulations*.

Mass and dimension limits under the gazette

The gazette notice applies only to two-trailer road trains (Type 1) with a tandem axle dolly and a maximum mass of 79.5 tonnes¹.

Table 1 Mass limits (gazette)²

Axle group	Limit
Steer axle	6.0t
Steer axle (where the tyre section is at least 295mm)	6.5t ³
Steer axle (where the tyre section width is at least 375mm)	7.1 t
Drive axle and tandem axle dolly	16.5t ⁴
Tri-axle group	20.0t ⁵

¹ Road trains participating in [Concessional Mass Limits \(CML\)](#) may operate at up to 81.5 tonnes.

² Road trains operating under the notice must comply with the axle space mass limits contained in Table 4 in Schedule 1 of the *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation*.

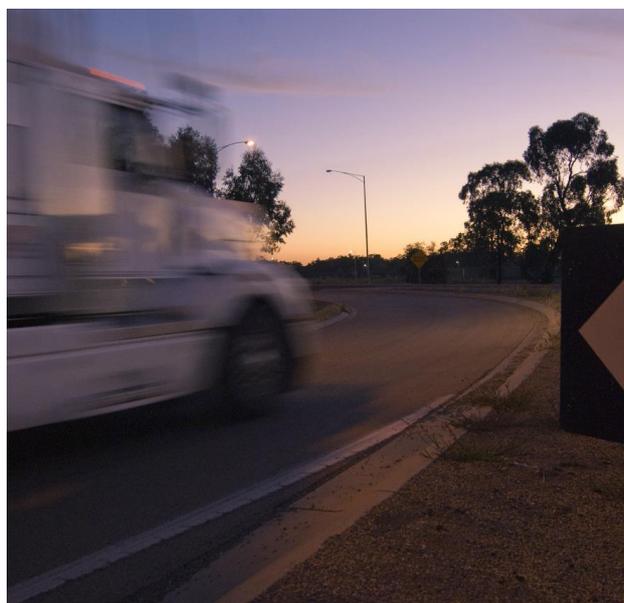
Table 2 Dimension limits (gazette)

Dimension	Limit
Length	36.5m
Height	4.3 or 4.6m ⁶
Width	2.5m

Operating conditions under the gazette

Road trains operating under the gazette must display a 'road train' warning sign at the front and rear of the combination.

More detail on operating requirements such as speed limits, vehicle standards and the minimum rating for couplings can be found in the NHVR's National Class 2 Road Train Operator's Guide available at <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/files/202006-1153-national-class-2-road-train-operators-guide.pdf>



³ If the tyre section width is less than 295mm, the steer axle may be 6.5 tonne as long as the prime mover meets the conditions set out in Schedule 3 of the *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation*.

⁴ 17.0 tonnes under CML

⁵ 21.0 tonnes under CML

⁶ 4.6m is permitted for Livestock Vehicles and Car Carriers

Access under the gazette

Victoria's approved road train network is restricted to the north west of Victoria, with access no further south than Ouyen and Swan Hill. The approved network can be found [here](#).

Operators seeking access beyond the approved road train network must have a road train that meets the requirements of a High Productivity Freight Vehicle (HPFV). Further information on HPFVs and Victoria's HPFV network can be found [here](#).

Permit arrangements

Two-year permits to operate on the approved road train network are available for combinations fitted with a tri-axle dolly and/or operating at higher mass limits (HML). Consideration will also be given to B-triple (including modular B-triple), A-triple and A-B-triple combinations.

Road trains operating at HML that comply with the axle-spacing specifications in the Appendix do not require a structural assessment.

Mass and dimension limits under permit

Table 3 Mass limits (permit)

Axle Group	Limit
Steer axle	As per gazette
Steer axle (where the tyre section is at least 295mm)	As per gazette
Steer axle (where the tyre section width is at least 375mm)	As per gazette
Drive-axle group and tandem axle dolly	17.0t
Tri-axle group and tri-axle dolly	22.5t
Quad-axle group	27.0t

Table 4 Dimension limits (permit)

Dimension	Limit
Width	As per gazette
Length	As per gazette
Height	As per gazette
Height – hay	4.6m

Operating conditions under permit

More detail on operating requirements such as speed limits, vehicle standards and the minimum rating for couplings can be found in the NHVR's National Class 2 Road Train Operator's Guide available at <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/files/202006-1153-national-class-2-road-train-operators-guide.pdf>

In addition, road trains operating at HML must:

- be fitted with a GPS device accredited under the Intelligent Access Program (IAP);
- be accredited under the Mass Management module of the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme; and
- be fitted with certified Road Friendly Suspension (RFS).

Road trains transporting livestock on the approved road train network must provide evidence that the company and driver are enrolled in the [New South Wales Livestock Loading Scheme](#).

Access under permit

Access under permit is the same as access under gazette. Victoria's approved road train network is restricted to the north west of Victoria, with access no further south than Ouyen and Swan Hill. The approved network can be found [here](#).

Operators seeking access beyond the approved road train network must have their vehicle meet the requirements of an HPFV. Further information on HPFVs and Victoria's HPFV network can be found [here](#).

Special arrangements for road trains transporting hay and grain

To lessen the economic impact of COVID-19, a three-year transitional arrangement will apply to road-trains transporting hay and grain (not livestock) on specified routes.

Those routes can be found [here](#)

Road trains transporting hay and grain are subject to the same mass, access and operating conditions as vehicles under permit, with the exception that road trains transporting hay:

- are permitted to operate up to a width of 2.7 metres
- can only operate at general mass limits.
- must comply with the conditions in the [Tasmania and Victoria Class 3 Baled Hay Dimension Exemption Notice](#)

Permits will be issued annually and can be renewed up to 30 June 2024.

FAQ

Can I access the approved road train network if my depot/farm/property is not an approved road?

Applications will be considered for properties within 15.0 kilometres of the approved network.

Access beyond the approved network is likely to require a geometric assessment to ensure that the vehicle can safely exit the property and negotiate turns. If a geometric assessment is required it will be conducted at the expense of the operator and may involve engaging a [PBS Assessor](#) or a physical trial of the route.

Depending on the route, a structural assessment may also be required. Such assessments can take between 8 to 15 business days to complete.

Prior to applying for access, an operator should first seek access from local government if the property is located on a municipal road.

If I want to operate above the gazetted masses, will I need a bridge assessment?

A bridge assessment is not required if you comply with the minimum and maximum axle spacings of a 36.5m A-double shown in the [Victoria's High Productivity Freight Vehicle \(HPFV\) networks Information Sheet](#) or the minimum and maximum axle spacings illustrated in the Appendix.⁷

Road trains that do not comply will require a bridge assessment.

Can I operate a B-triple, A-B triple, modular B-triple or A-triple on the approved network?

Yes you can, provided:

- The combination is no longer than 36.5 metres; and
- A bridge and geometric assessment is conducted to ensure that the combination can safely negotiate the network and does not place undue stress on infrastructure.

Do I need a permit to cross rail tracks?

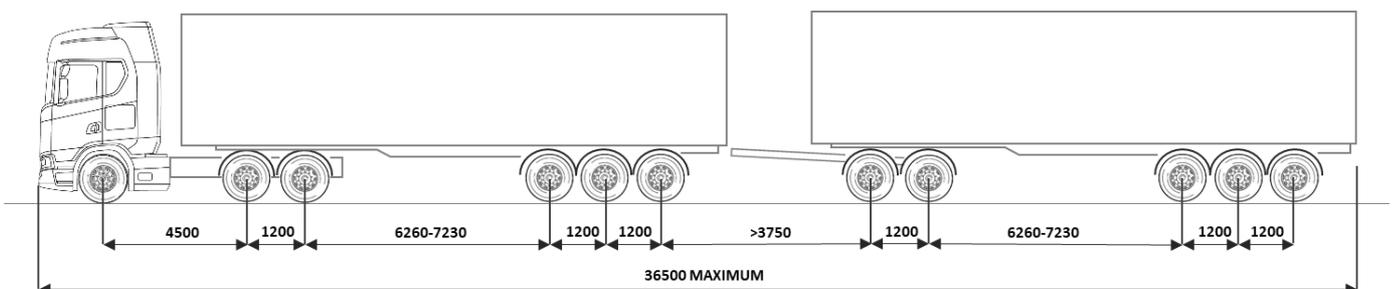
Operators of road train that exceed 26.0 metres in length and cross at-grade rail or tram tracks must apply for an over-dimensional load (ODL) rail permit.

Permits can take up to 15 business days to process.

Further information on obtaining an ODL rail permit is available at <https://transport.vic.gov.au/getting-around/roads/over-dimensional-load-permits-for-travel-across-railways-and-tramways>.

Appendix

Axle spacings for road trains



⁷ If the combination has an axle spacing that is less than or exceeds the spacings detailed in the Appendix, a bridge assessment will be required.