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vicroads

INFORMATION BULLETIN

Heavy tow trucks

keeping victorians connected

Introduction

This information bulletin describes the various means of towing heavy vehicles in Victoria.

It details the types of towing operations allowed under Type A, B, C and D permits, mass and dimension limits, and operating requirements and responsibilities.

Objective

The objective is the safe, efficient and timely removal of damaged or disabled vehicles from roads to minimise traffic disruption and congestion. It is also to assist in the transfer of vehicles between premises. To facilitate this objective, increased mass and dimensions are provided for towing the different types of heavy vehicles.

The following are important requirements in meeting the objective:

a. To ensure road safety and to protect road infrastructure, vehicles that are to be towed (where safe and practical) must be reduced in size and weight to allow them to be readily moved. Where possible, they must be unloaded or the trailers disconnected.

b. For safety reasons, at no time should a vehicle's manufacturer's ratings be exceeded. This includes a vehicle's axle ratings, Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) and Gross Combination Mass (GCM).

c. Premises to depots towing will only involve transporting a single, unladen vehicle between premises/depots.

d. When it is necessary to tow heavier vehicles or longer combinations, travel should be on the arterial Higher Mass Limits road network as much as possible, where the bridges are generally of a higher capacity.

e. Designers of heavy tow trucks should continually seek to minimise the tare mass of tow trucks to reduce the impact on road infrastructure. Also, the design should ensure that laden tow trucks have sufficient mass on the steer axle to maintain safe steering.

Types of towing operations

There are three types of towing operations:

a. **Accident towing** – is the removal of a motor vehicle that has been damaged as a result of an accident and cannot be safely driven on its own from the crash site, or cannot be driven on a road without compromising the safety of other road users.

b. **Disabled vehicle towing** – is the removal from a roadway of a broken down vehicle due to a mechanical or system failure.

c. **Towing between premises/depots**– this includes all other towing such as the transport of unladen vehicles between a transport depot and a workshop.

Please note that when removing an accident damaged vehicle from a road or road related area, removal can only be undertaken if the operator of this tow truck holds a towing operator accreditation and a tow truck licence.

Types of tow trucks

There are four types of tow trucks:

Hook tow truck – has a cable and hook mechanism to lift and tow vehicles.

Underlift tow truck – has a rigid arm that extends under disabled vehicles and lifts them off the road surface for towing.

Tilt deck truck – is a rigid truck where the deck can hydraulically tilt to enable a disabled vehicle to be winched on to its back.

Low deck semi-trailer – is a prime mover and semi-trailer combination where the semi-trailer has a low deck and loading ramps or a tilt deck for winching a disabled vehicle on to its deck.

Permit types

Tow trucks that exceed the regulatory mass and dimension limits may operate under one of the following four permits:

- **Type A** – Standard hook and underlift tow truck permit with standard mass limits and conditions for operators who do not require higher masses or increased dimensions (see below);
- **Type B** – Heavier hook and underlift tow truck permit for operators who tow heavier combinations such as B-doubles; (see page 5);
- **Type C** – Tilt tray tow truck permit with an increased laden height limit (see page 8);
- **Type D** – Low deck semi-trailer tow truck permit with increased laden mass, height and length limits (see page 8).

The permits available from VicRoads and the NHVR post 1 September 2013 will be valid for a period of 12 months, and should be renewed annually.

Type A – Standard hook and underlift tow truck permit

Unladen travel

Hook and underlift tow trucks operating under a **Type A Permit** can be up to the following mass and dimension limits:

Unladen tow truck with a hook or underlift towing mechanism			
Mass		**Dimensions**	
Single steer axle	7.0 tonnes	Width	2.5 metres
Twin-steer load sharing axle group	11.0 tonnes	Height	4.3 metres
Tandem axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle)	16.5 tonnes	Overall length (including tow truck and its lifting apparatus)	12.5 metres

Laden travel

Towing between premises/depots

Hook and underlift tow trucks operating under a **Type A Permit** can undertake towing between premises and depots on the Victorian road network up to the following mass and dimension limits when laden:

Laden tow truck with a hook or underlift towing mechanism			
Mass		**Dimensions**	
Single steer axle	7.0 tonnes	Width	3.0 metres
Twin-steer load sharing axle group	11.0 tonnes	Height (must comply with route restrictions stated in the latest *Height clearance on roads* and *Height clearance under structures for permit vehicles* bulletins)	4.6 metres
Tandem axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle)	18.5 tonnes	Overall length (including tow truck and towed vehicle combination)	26.0 metres
		Overall length for towing buses (including tow truck and towed articulated bus)	32.0 metres

Towing a bus

Accident and disabled (incapacitated) vehicle towing

Hook and underlift tow trucks operating under a **Type A Permit** can undertake accident and disabled vehicle towing on the Victorian road network subject to travel requirements and conditions, up to the following mass and dimension limits when laden:

Laden tow truck with a hook or underlift towing mechanism			
Mass		**Dimensions**	
Single steer axle	7.0 tonnes	Width	3.0 metres
Twin-steer load sharing axle group	11.0 tonnes	Height (must comply with route restrictions stated in the latest *Height clearance on roads* and *Height clearance under structures for permit vehicles* bulletins)	4.6 metres
Tandem axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle)	18.5 tonnes **(general access)**	Overall length (including tow truck and towed vehicle combination)	26.0 metres **(general access)**
Tandem axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle)	20.0 tonnes **(restricted access)**	Overall length for towing buses (including tow truck and towed articulated bus)	32.0 metres **(general access)**
		35.0 metres overall length (including tow truck and towed vehicle combination)	35.0 metres **(restricted access)**

When either the mass or dimension exceeds the general access limit of :

a. 18.5 tonnes on the tandem axle; or

b. 26.0 metres overall length (except when towing an articulated bus):

- travel is restricted to clear an accident site or remove an incapacitated vehicle from a road or road related area that is blocking a carriageway only;
- the incapacitated vehicle must be towed to the first safe and practical area for breaking up/unloading in order to comply with general access limits of 18.5 tonnes and 26.0 metres overall combination length;
- travel over any bridge off the arterial Higher Mass Limits road network must be at maximum speed of 10 km/h. with travel in the lanes nearest the centre of structures; and
- the vehicle and vehicle combination must not cross any timber bridges.

Type A Permit specific conditions

The following operating conditions apply when towing under the Type A Permit:

Travel restrictions

a. When the tow truck and towed vehicle combination exceeds 3.0 metres wide or 26.0 metres overall length, travel is only permitted to the first safe and practical place off the carriageway for breaking down the combination.

b. When towing vehicles, as far as possible travel should be on the arterial Higher Mass Limits road network, where the bridges are generally of a higher capacity. **Travel over any bridge off the arterial Higher Mass Limits road network must be at a maximum speed of 10 km/h with travel in the lanes nearest the centre of the structures.**

Pilot Vehicles

When travelling at night, when the towed vehicle combination exceeds 2.5 metres wide or 25.0 metres long, the combination must be accompanied by a vehicle driven by a certified pilot vehicle driver.

Tow truck with hook mechanism

Type B - Heavier hook and underlift tow truck permit

Unladen

Hook and underlift tow trucks operating under a **Type B Permit** can be up to the following mass and dimension limits:

Unladen tow truck with a hook or underlift towing mechanism			
Mass		**Dimensions**	
Single steer axle	7.0 tonnes	Width	2.5 metres
Twin-steer load sharing axle group	11.0 tonnes	Height	4.3 metres
Tandem axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle)	16.5 tonnes	Overall length (including tow truck and its lifting apparatus)	12.5 metres
Tri-axle group	20.0 tonnes		

Laden travel

Towing between premises/depots

Hook and underlift tow trucks operating under the **Type B Permit** can undertake towing between premises and depots on the Victorian road network up to the following mass and dimension limits when laden:

Laden tow truck with a hook or underlift towing mechanism			
Mass		**Dimensions**	
Single steer axle	7.0 tonnes	Width	3.0 metres
Twin-steer load sharing axle group	11.0 tonnes	Height (must comply with route restrictions stated in the latest *Height clearance on roads* and *Height clearance under structures for permit vehicles* bulletins)	4.6 metres
Tandem axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle)	18.5 tonnes	Overall length (including tow truck and towed vehicle combination)	26.0 metres
Tri-axle group (with 12 suitably rated tyres per axle)	21.0 tonnes	Overall length for towing buses (including tow truck and towed articulated bus)	32.0 metres

Underlift tow truck

Tow truck with tri-axle group

Accident and disabled (incapacitated) vehicle towing

Hook and underlift tow trucks operating under the **Type B Permit** can undertake towing of accident and disabled vehicles on the Victorian road network subject to travel requirements and operating conditions, up to the following mass and dimensions limits:

Laden tow truck with a hook or underlift towing mechanism			
Mass		**Dimensions**	
Single steer axle	7.0 tonnes	Width	3.0 metres
Twin-steer load sharing axle group	11.0 tonnes	Height (must comply with route restrictions stated in the latest *Height clearance on roads* and *Height clearance under structures for permit vehicles* bulletins)	4.6 metres
Tandem axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle)	18.5 tonnes **(general access)**	Overall length (including tow truck and towed vehicle combination)	26.0 metres **(general access)**
Tandem axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle)	21.0 tonnes **(restricted access)**	Overall length (including tow truck and towed articulated bus)	32.0 metres **(general access)**
Tri-axle group (with 12 suitably rated tyres per axle)	21.0 tonnes **(general access)**	Overall length (including tow truck and towed vehicle combination)	39.0 metres **(restricted access)**
Tri-axle group (with 12 suitably rated tyres per axle)	24.5 tonnes **(restricted access)**		

When either the mass or dimension exceeds the general access limit of:

a. 18.5 tonnes on the tandem axle; or

b. 21.0 tonnes on the tri-axle group; or

c. 26.0 metres overall length (except when towing an articulated bus):

- travel is restricted to clear an accident site or remove an incapacitated vehicle from a road or road related area that is blocking a carriageway only;
- the incapacitated vehicle must be towed to the first safe and practical location for breaking up/unloading in order to comply with general access limits of 18.5 tonnes for a tandem axle group, 21.0 tonnes for a tri-axle and 26.0 metres overall combination length;
- travel over any bridge off the arterial Higher Mass Limits road network must be at maximum speed of 10 km/h with travel in the lanes nearest the centre of the structures;
- the vehicle and vehicle combination must not cross any timber bridges.

Type B Permit specific conditions:

The following operating conditions apply when towing accident damaged or disabled (incapacitated) vehicles under the Type B Permit

a. Pilot vehicles

When travelling at night, when the towed vehicle combination exceeds 2.5 metres wide or 25.0 metres long, the combination must be accompanied by a vehicle driven by a certified pilot vehicle driver.

b. On-board weighing devices

To prevent (severe) damage and stresses to road pavements, culverts and bridges occurring, rigid heavy tow trucks with a hook or underlift mechanism operating under the Type B permit must have an operating on-board weighing device by 1 January 2014. It must measure the mass on the rear axle group and readily display the recording for the tow truck driver, a VicRoads Authorised Officer or Police Officer to view.

c. Travel restrictions

When towing vehicles, as far as possible travel should be on the arterial Higher Mass Limits road network, where the bridges are generally of a higher capacity. **Travel over any bridge off the arterial Higher Mass Limits road network must be at a maximum speed of 10 km/h with travel in the lanes nearest the centre of the structures.**

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General conditions for hook and underlift tow trucks operating under a Type A standard permit or Type B heavier permit

a. Unladen underlift tow trucks

Unladen hook and underlift tow trucks can have increased mass on the steer axle of up to 7.0 tonnes. This assists in maintaining steering when towing a vehicle. However, to be eligible for 7.0 tonnes on the steer axle the vehicles must comply with conditions of operation for 6.5 tonnes steer axle. Evidence of compliance must be presented when applying for permits. (see conditions on page 9).

b. Towing to safe place

When the mass of the rear axle group of the tow truck exceeds 18.5 tonnes for a tandem axle group or 21.0 tonnes for a tri-axle group, travel must only be to clear a crash site or remove a disabled (incapacitated) vehicle blocking a carriageway. **The vehicle may only be towed to the first safe and practical location.**

Similarly, when the overall length of the tow truck and towed vehicle exceeds 26.0 metres apart from moving a bus, travel must only be to clear a crash site or remove a disabled (incapacitated) vehicle blocking a carriageway. **The vehicle may only be towed to the first safe and practical location.**

After towing to the first safe and practical location, adjusting the vehicle combination may include disconnecting trailers from the motor vehicle or removing the load. This includes disconnecting trailers that do not have quick-release systems. It also includes using appropriate equipment, which may include a mobile crane to support trailers without landing legs.

The first safe and practical location for breaking up the combination where the sections of towed vehicles can be readily disconnected and each section towed separately can include, but is not limited to:

a. a road or road related area with little traffic; and

b. the first available off-road area.

When breaking up/unloading at the side of the road or road related area the operator and driver of the towed vehicle combination are responsible for ensuring all relevant Dangerous Goods and OH&S legislative requirements, and also the placement of triangles required by Rule 227 of the *National Road Rules*, are met.

The fact that costs will be incurred to disconnect a trailer, unload a vehicle, or provide security for the vehicle and any load are not reasons to deem a place unsuitable for the breaking down of the combination.

c. Flat towing

To minimise axle loadings and the resulting stress on bridges, flat towing or only partial lifting of the towing vehicle's steering axle should occur whenever possible and when it is safe to do so.

Where a tow truck tows a damaged or disabled vehicle that is operating under a Class 1, 2 or 3 Notice published in the Victoria Government Gazette or an oversize or overmass Class 1, 2 or 3 vehicle permit, then the damaged or disabled vehicle may only be towed along relevant authorised routes.

Towed vehicle

The maximum axle and axle group mass of the towed vehicle should not exceed:

Single steer axle	6.5 tonnes
Twin-steer load sharing axle group	11.0 tonnes
Single drive axle with mechanical suspension	9.0 tonnes
Single drive axle with road friendly suspension	10.0 tonnes
Tandem axle group with 6 tyres	14.0 tonnes
Tandem axle group with 8 tyres	16.5 tonnes
Tandem axle group with 8 tyres (NHVAS – HML)	17.0 tonnes
Tri-axle group with 6 wide profile tyres or 12 tyres	20.0 tonnes
Tri-axle group with 12 tyres (NHVAS – HML)	22.5 tonnes
In the case of a Class 1, 2 or 3 vehicle, the mass allowed is the respective masses in the Class 1, 2 or 3 Notice or Permit	

If the tow truck is engaged in the recovery of a damaged or disabled vehicle on a road, it is exempted from any oversize vehicle travel time restrictions until it reaches the first safe and practical location.

However, operators undertaking towing between premises/depots from an off-road site must comply with the travel time restrictions stated in the permit.

Lights/Lightboard on towed vehicles

A towed vehicle or vehicle combination behind a rigid tow truck with a hook or underlift mechanism must have a lightboard that:

a. can be securely placed on the rear of the towed vehicle and connected electrically or wirelessly to the tow truck; and

b. includes lights and reflector lamps that would, if attached to the rear of the tow truck, meet the standards for registration that apply to a tow truck;

c. includes tail lights, number plate lights, brake lights, reversing lights, direction indicator lights and rear reflectors); and

d. displays the number plate of the tow truck.

Where a towed vehicle has side marker lights and is being towed at night or in low visibility, they must be lit. If they are not working, portable side marker lights must be fitted which are located at least at 2.0 metre intervals.

Type C – Tilt tray tow truck permit

Tilt tray trucks can undertake accident, disabled vehicle and premises to premises towing throughout the Victorian road network. Provided the vehicle has a tandem rear axle group and a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) rating of at least 23.0 tonnes, it can operate up to the following mass and dimension limits:

Mass	
Single steer axle	6.0 tonnes
Twin-steer load sharing axle group	11.0 tonnes
Tandem drive axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle) or Tandem drive axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle) with road friendly suspension	16.5 tonnes 17.0 tonnes
Tandem rear axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle) or Tandem rear axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle) with road friendly suspension	16.5 tonnes 17.0 tonnes

Dimensions	
Width (to provide for a distorted/damaged vehicle	3.0 metres
Height (must comply with route restrictions stated in the latest *Height clearance on roads* and *Height clearance under structures for permit vehicles* bulletins)	4.8 metres
Overall length (including tow truck and towed vehicle combination)	12.5 metres

Rigid tilt tray truck

Type D – Low loader tow truck permit

Low deck semi-trailers can undertake accident, disabled vehicle and premise to premise towing throughout the Victorian road network up to the following mass and dimension limits

Mass	
Single steer axle	6.0 tonnes
Twin-steer load sharing axle group	11.0 tonnes
Tandem axle group (with 8 suitably rated tyres per axle)	18.5 tonnes
Tri-axle group (with 12 suitably rated tyres per axle)	25.0 tonnes*

Dimensions	
Width (to provide for a distorted/damaged vehicle	3.0 metres
Height (must comply with route restrictions stated in the latest *Height clearance on roads* and *Height clearance under structures for permit vehicles* bulletins)	4.8 metres
Overall length (with the prime mover and semi-trailer not exceeding 19.0 metres long and the carried vehicle protruding out the rear of the trailer by up to 4.9 metres from the centre of the trailer axle group)	20.2 metres

**To operate above 20.0 tonnes on the tri-axle group, the distance between the centre of the last axle on the prime mover and the centre of the first axle on the trailer must be a minimum of 6.0 metres.*

Tilt deck semi-trailer

Operating conditions that apply to all tow truck operations

The following operating conditions apply to all towing operations carried out under Type A, B, C and D permits.

General bridge restrictions

A tow truck can travel on the Victorian road network provided it does not cross any mass restricted bridge where the vehicle or combination exceeds the posted mass limit.

When a tandem axle group exceeds 16.5 tonnes or a tri-axle group exceeds 20.0 tonnes in either a tow truck or towed vehicle, the combination must not cross any timber beam, timber truss or timber deck bridges.

Towing vehicles by a hook or underlift mechanism across large culverts and bridges with other heavy vehicle traffic should be avoided.

When following any other heavy or oversize vehicle, maintain a distance of 200 metres from that vehicle, to minimise stresses on structures, except:

- when overtaking the vehicle in front; or
- when the vehicle in front is stopping; or
- when there is a separate lane for overtaking; or
- in an urban area where it is impractical to maintain a distance of 200 metres.

Safe travel

The registered operator and driver of a tow truck and any person who caused or permitted the vehicle to be driven, are responsible for planning each journey to ensure that the:

a. vehicle crosses bridges and negotiates curves in a safe manner, bearing in mind that some roads and intersections may not be capable of accommodating vehicles at the allowable mass and dimensions.

b. vehicle is not driven under a bridge or structure if the vehicle's height is the same as, or exceeds, the height limit on any sign.

c. clearance to other overhead structures, cables, wires and trees is at least 200mm greater than the height of the vehicle and sufficient to ensure safe passage; and

d. vehicle is not driven on a road or bridge if it would exceed any posted mass or dimension limit.

The VicRoads bulletin *Height clearance on roads*, which provides information about planning routes to avoid low bridges and some tram wires, must be carried in the tow truck and produced when requested by a VicRoads Authorised Officer or Police Officer.

Minimum steer axle mass

To maintain adequate steering when towing, the tow truck must be:

a. designed to the applicable Australian Design Rules and *Vehicle Standards Bulletin 6 - Heavy vehicle modifications - Section T - Tow Trucks*; and

b. capable of being safely controlled when towing, with the minimum steer axle mass of the tow truck sufficient to maintain safe and adequate steering in all prevailing road, traffic and weather conditions.

Steer axle mass above 6.0 Tonnes

Victoria has adopted the nationally agreed requirements for trucks with a steer axle mass above 6.0 tonnes. Heavy tow trucks first registered as a tow truck in Victoria after 1 September 2009, with a steer axle mass above 6.0 tonnes, must have:

a. an engine complying with the emission control requirements of ADR 80/01 (Euro 4 engine) or later version.

b. a front underrun protection device that complies with UN ECE Regulation No. 93.

c. a cabin that complies with UN ECE Regulation No. 29.

d. appropriately rated tyres, axle and suspension.

Exemption from travel time restrictions

A tow truck engaged in the recovery of a damaged or disabled (incapacitated) heavy vehicle or vehicle combination on a road is generally exempted from the travel time restrictions in the permit. However, operators undertaking premise/depot towing from an off-road site must comply with the travel time restrictions.

Carrying documents

The following current documents must be carried in the driving compartment of a tow truck and produced on request by a VicRoads' Authorised Officer or a Police Officer:

- The applicable Type A, B, C or D permit;
- VicRoads' publications - *Heavy tow trucks May 2013*, *Height clearance on roads* and *Oversize Load Carrying Vehicles* information bulletins.

Crossing tramway tracks and railway crossings

Public Transport Victoria (PTV) is responsible for the management of their structures on the road network. PTV require permission to be obtained by the tow truck operator to cross a tram track or railway crossing, if a tow truck or combination exceeds the following dimension limits (Tel: 9655 6134):

a) Tramway tracks – 3.0 metres wide, 4.3 metres high or 26.0 metres long

b) Railway Crossings – 3.0 metres wide, 4.9 metres high or 26.0 metres long.

Travel over the West Gate Bridge

When crossing the West Gate Bridge, if a tandem axle group exceeds 18.5 tonnes or a tri-axle group exceeds 20.0 tonnes within a tow truck or towed vehicle:

a. the tow truck must travel in one of the two right hand lanes nearest the centre median; and

b. if it is incapable of maintaining a speed of at least 65 km/h –

(i) one rotating yellow warning light must be affixed to the rear of the towed vehicle if it is less than 3.5 metres wide; or

(ii) two rotating yellow warning lights must be affixed to the rear of the towed vehicle if it is more than 3.5 metres wide; or

(iii) a pilot vehicle must travel at the rear of the towed vehicle within a distance of 50.0 metres; or

(iv) a VicRoads incident management officer, VicRoads Authorised Officer or Police Officer must travel at the rear of the towed vehicle.

Travel on tollways and in the City of Melbourne

EastLink, CityLink and the City of Melbourne are responsible for managing traffic on their roads/structures. It is a requirement by these road managers that if the tow truck or combination exceeds general access mass and/or dimension limits and is to travel on those roads, the tow truck operator must:

a) Obtain permission from the City of Melbourne (Tel: (03) 9658 8570), before operating the oversize/overmass vehicle combination n the area of the City of Melbourne bounded by and including Spring Street, Victoria Street, Peel Street, Dudley Street, Spencer Street and Flinders Street.

b) Upon receipt of a VicRoads' permit, as soon as practical contact CityLink (Tel: 9674 2001 or Fax (03) 9674 2060) to advise it of the permit and obtain a reference number. Also, at least 30 minutes before travelling on the CityLink (the Southern Link, Western Link or Batman Avenue), telephone CityLink to confirm the intended travel and to obtain advice on traffic conditions, any roadworks and lane closures.

c) Upon receipt of a VicRoads' permit, as soon as practical contact EastLink (Tel: 9955 1900 or Fax (03) 9955 1907) to advise it of the permit and obtain a reference number. Also, at least 30 minutes before travelling on the CityLink (the Southern Link, Western Link or Batman Avenue), telephone CityLink to confirm the intended travel and to obtain advice on traffic conditions, any roadworks and lane closures.

Accessing emergency lanes on freeways

To quickly get around stopped traffic to clear a damaged or disabled vehicle, a tow truck is permitted to travel in the emergency stopping lanes on freeways, provided it is:

a. only for the purpose of accessing a crash site or other incident on a freeway or to remove or tow damaged or disabled vehicles from that freeway; and

b. only at times when driving in other lanes is not possible or slow due to congestion or an obstruction.

When travelling in an emergency stopping lane, the driver of the tow truck must:

a. activate the vehicle's yellow flashing or rotating warning lights; and

b. travel at a speed not exceeding 40 km/h; and

c. provide clear passage to emergency vehicles at all times.

Warning devices

Where the tow truck and towed vehicle combination:

a. length exceeds 22.0 metres, but not more than 25.0 metres, an OVERSIZE warning sign must be affixed at the rear of the combination.

b. is wider than 2.5 metres or longer than 25.0 metres, an OVERSIZE warning sign must be affixed at the front and rear of the combination and four red or yellow or red and yellow flags (at least 450mm x 450mm) attached to the extremities of the vehicle and any load.

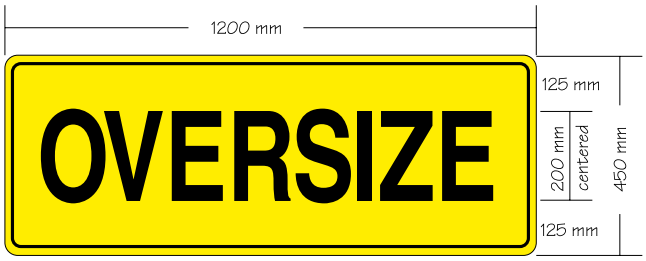
The warning sign must:

a. have the word OVERSIZE in black letters on a Class 1 or Class 2 yellow retro-reflective background; and

b. have the manufacturer's name or trademark, and the brand and class of retro-reflective material permanently marked in block letters. The letters should be at least 3mm but not more than 10mm high; and have a black border at least 20mm wide; and be made of flat, weatherproof material; and

c. be mounted vertically, with its bottom edge above the bottom of the bumper bar or at least 500mm above the ground if there is no bumper bar; and

d. show the word "OVERSIZE", in black upper-case lettering that conforms with typeface Series C(N) in Australian Standard AS 1744 Forms of Letters and Numerals for Road Signs.



The OVERSIZE warning sign may be in two parts, in which case:

a. the word OVER must be on the left part and the word SIZE on the right part; and

b. both parts must be mounted at the same height.

The OVERSIZE warning sign may be made of flexible material. However, it must meet the above requirements and be taut and affixed vertically so that the whole sign can be clearly seen.

Thin load projections

Where any load projects more than 150mm from the side of a vehicle and is less than 500mm thick, a warning light must be attached to the vehicle and a yellow rigid retro-reflective delineator, at least 300mm x 300mm must be attached to the front and rear of the projection.

Night travel

When travelling at night (between sunset and sunrise):

a. Side marker lights must be fitted and operating at least 2.0 metre intervals along any part of a load projecting from a vehicle.

b. A yellow rotating warning light is to be displayed on the tow truck and at the rear of a vehicle combination that is wider than 2.5 metres or longer than 22.0 metres.

c. A pilot vehicle must accompany the combination if the towed truck and towed vehicle combination exceeds 2.5 metres wide or 25.0 metres long.

Warning lights must emit a rotating, flashing, yellow coloured light. They must flash between 120 and 200 times a minute, and have a power of at least 55 watts.

A warning light must be clearly visible at a distance of 500 metres in all directions. If one warning light is not clearly visible from all directions, additional warning lights must be used (usually at the rearmost part of the vehicle combination) to ensure that at least one of the lights is always clearly visible from a distance of 500 metres.

Note that strobe lights cannot be used as warning lights.

Travel on narrow winding roads

When travelling on the narrow, winding roads listed below, and towing or carrying a vehicle or vehicle combination that exceeds 2.5 metres wide or 25.0 metres long to maintain road safety, the tow truck must be accompanied by a VicRoads Authorised Officer or Police Officer or a pilot vehicle driven by a Certified Pilot Vehicle Driver:

a. Grampians National Park:

- Northern Grampian Road (Mt Victory Road);
- Silverband Road; and
- Wartook Road.

b. Gellibrand River Road between Carlisle River and Lower Gellibrand;

c. Gellibrand-Carlisle Road between Carlisle River and Gellibrand;

d. Euroa-Mansfield Road (Euroa-Strathbogie Road);

e. Great Ocean Road between O'Donohue Road, Anglesea and Cobden-Port Campbell Road, Port Campbell;

f. Hamilton Highway (known as Deviation Road) between Hyland Street and Minerva Road at Fyansford;

g. Mansfield-Whitfield Road; and

h. Tatong-Tolmie Road

Mountainous Areas, Colac-Surf Coast Area, Otway Area and the Gippsland Ranges Area

When travelling on the Mountainous, Colac-Surf Coast, Otway Area and the Gippsland Ranges Area :

(a) The "Oversize Load Carrying Vehicles" information bulletin which shows the Mountainous, Colac-Surf Coast, Otway Area and the Gippsland Ranges Area must be carried in the driving compartment of this tow and produced if requested by a VicRoads' Authorised Officer or a Police Officer; and

(b) An escort is not required within the Mountainous Areas, Colac-Surf Coast Area and Gippsland Ranges Area on the following roads:

- Bass Highway;
- Benambra Road between Omeo and Benambra;
- Boolarra-Churchill Road;
- Dargo Road between Dargo and Glenaladale;
- Gelantipy Road between Buchan and Gelantipy;
- Great Alpine Road between Bruthen and Omeo, and between Harrietville and Myrtleford;
- Kiewa Valley Highway;
- Maroondah Highway between Coldstream and Healesville, and between St Fillans and Buxton;
- Melba Highway between Glenburn and Coldstream;
- Mirboo North-Trafalgar Road between Strzelecki Highway and Narracan Connection Road;
- Moe - Rawson Road;
- Monaro Highway;
- Morwell - Thorpdale Road;
- Omeo Highway between Great Alpine Road and Benambra Road;
- School Road, Erica;
- South Gippsland Highway;
- Strzelecki Highway;
- Thomson Dam Access Road; and
- Tyers - Thomson Valley Road from Tyres to Thomson Dam Access Road.

Low deck semi-trailer for carrying a disabled vehicle

No travelling if low visibility

A tow truck must not travel if:

a. visibility is less than 250 metres in the daytime; or

b. if the headlights of a vehicle approaching within 250 metres cannot be seen at night.

If a vehicle is already travelling when visibility is reduced to the level described above or it is necessary to remove a vehicle from a road, the driver must drive it to the first safe practical place and wait until visibility improves beyond the above levels before continuing to travel. In such circumstances, the towed vehicle combination must be accompanied by a VicRoads Authorised Officer, Police Officer or a pilot vehicle driven by a Pilot Vehicle Driver.

Pilot vehicles

When a pilot vehicle is accompanying a tow truck, the pilot vehicle must travel at the rear when on a divided road or at the front when on a road that is not a divided road.

The pilot vehicle must:

a. have at least four wheels

b. not exceed 4.5 tonnes gross

c. not tow a trailer or carry a load except for tools

d. have an electronic device that allows the driver of the pilot vehicle to communicate to the driver of the tow truck

e. must display a warning light(s) and warning sign.

The warning light on a pilot vehicle must be placed in a position so that the warning sign is not obscured.

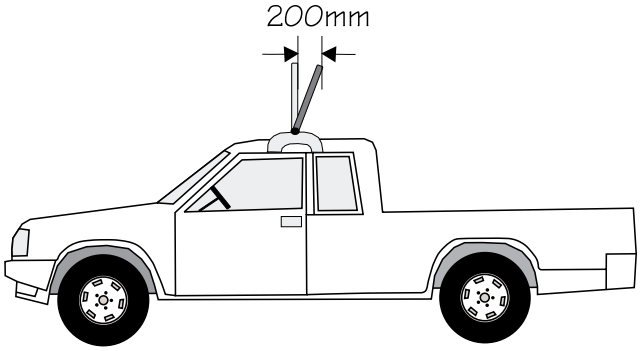
The low beam headlights on a pilot vehicle must be switched on when it is accompanying an oversize vehicle or combination during the daytime.

The warning sign on the pilot vehicle must comply with the minimum dimensions shown in the diagram below and :

a. be mounted on the roof

b. have the words OVERSIZE LOAD AHEAD in black on a yellow retro-reflective background on both faces of the sign and be made of stiff, flat, weatherproof material; and

c. not lean back more than 200mm as shown in the following diagram:



Regulatory definitions and requirements

Accident damaged motor vehicle means a motor vehicle that has been damaged as the result of a road accident.

Heavy tow truck means a tow truck that has a gross vehicle mass of 4.0 tonnes or more that is capable of towing motor vehicles.

Tow, in relation to any motor vehicle, includes:

a. lifting and towing the motor vehicle

b. lifting and carrying the motor vehicle

c. lifting the motor vehicle for the purpose of towing the motor vehicle

but does not inlcude salvage of the motor vehicle.

Tow truck means:

a. any motor vehicle:

(i) that is equipped with a crane, winch, ramp or other lifting device; and

(ii) that is used or intended to be used for the towing of motor vehicles; or

b. a motor vehicle to which is attached, temporarily or otherwise, a trailer or device that is:

(i) equipped with a winch or ramp or other lifting device; and

(ii) that is used or intended to be used for the towing of motor vehicles.

In addition, the regulations require a tow truck to have:

a. dual tyres on the rear axle group

b. a crane, winch, hoist or other lifting device which has a safe working load of not less than 4.0 tonnes

c. a broom, shovel and a rubbish receptacle (for accident towing)

d. a fully maintained foam fire extinguisher of at least 4.5 litres capacity or a dry chemical powder fire extinguisher of at least 4.5 kilograms capacity

e. a warning light or lights (other than a strobe light)

f. adjustable lights mounted so that the person responsible for loading or unloading an accident damaged motor vehicle will have sufficient illumination to do so safely when it is dark

g. a lightboard.

Your responsibility

It is the responsibility of both the operator and driver of a tow truck to:

a. comply with the *Transport Act 1983*, the *Road Safety Act 1986*, *Accident Towing Services Act 2007*, *Accident Towing Services Regulations 2008*, and any other regulations, codes of practice, rules or standards made under those Acts; and

b. comply with the requirements of any licence or permit issued in relation to the operation of the relevant tow truck; and

c. ensure that the documents stated in the permit are carried in the driving compartment of a tow truck and produced on request by a VicRoads' Authorised Officer or a Police Officer; and

d. ensure that there is sufficient overhead clearance under wires, structures and trees and suitable ground clearance at rail level crossings; and

e. ensure that disruption to other road users is kept to a minimum having regard to the width of the road, the size of the vehicle, the time of travel and the amount of traffic expected to be on the route.

Allowing vehicles to overtake

If traffic is banking up behind the tow truck due to its slower speed, where it is safe to do so, it should move to the left and if necessary stop to let following vehicles overtake.

Liability

The registered operator and driver accept responsibility for any damage arising in connection with the use of the permitted tow truck and indemnify VicRoads and the State of Victoria for any liability arising from the use of this tow truck.

Failure to comply with any of the conditions in an oversize and overmass vehicle permit and applicable Acts and Regulations, will leave the registered operator and driver liable for prosecution and may result in the permit being revoked.

Any trip is made at the absolute risk of the registered operator and driver of the vehicle. No representation is made by VicRoads that any road, bridge, culvert, causeway or grid is capable of withstanding the loads carried, or that there is sufficient clearance to any wires, structures, trees or rail level crossing.

It is the responsibility of the registered operator of the vehicle to ensue that there is appropriate insurance cover for the operation.

It is an offence to display a warning sign or operate a warning light when it is not required.

Applying for permits

When lodging an application, please attach a letter or specification sheet from the vehicle manufacturer stating the rating of:

a. The GVM for Type A, B, C and D permits

b. Steer axle rating for Type B permits

c. Drive axle group rating for Type B & D permits

d. Trailer axle group rating for Type D permits.

If this information is unavailable an approved vehicle engineer (Vehicle Assessment Signatory Scheme (VASS) engineer) must provide a certificate with the required ratings.

A VASS Approval Certificate will also be required for a tow truck with an after market lazy axle.

Applications for permits can be lodged by :

a. Faxing your application directly to the Statewide Permit Group (Fax: (03) 9881 8854), electing to complete the credit card section on the form, or including your credit number on the application if you have a current credit account with VicRoads; or

b. Posting your application to:
Statewide Permit Group
Road User Services
Private Bag 4,
Mount Waverley Vic 3149

When faxing or posting applications, payments can be made by attaching a cheque marked “Not negotiable” and made out to VicRoads; or

c. Attending any VicRoads customer service centre, paying by cash, cheque or credit card, and your application form will be forwarded to the Statewide Permit Group on your behalf.

Permits will be faxed or mailed to the applicant, as elected by the applicant on the form.

To contact the Statewide Permit Group, call (03) 9881 8852 or from country Victoria call 13 11 71.

A copy of the permit application form is available on the VicRoads website: **vicroads.vic.gov.au** under Tow Trucks.

Please note, annual permits will be made available from the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator once it commences operation. For more information please visit their website: **nhvr.gov.au**

vicroads
ABN 61 760 960 480

Application for Tow Truck Permit

Please complete the relevant sections of this form and sign below. Please print clearly in ink using BLOCK letters. If any part of this form is incomplete it cannot be processed.
Important: a fee, equivalent to the permit application fee, may be charged for amendments to permits. A receipt will not be forwarded unless specifically requested by the applicant.

Please return permit by ⊗ Post ⊗ Facsimile

Permit Number	
Current Permit Number	
Date Permit required by	D D • M M • Y Y Y Y
Date Permit required until	D D • M M • Y Y Y Y

Applicant Details

Registered operator of the vehicle *(as per the registration certificate)*

Operator *(if different from above)*

Home *(or Company)* Address

Postcode

Operational Address *(if different from above)*

Postcode

Phone | Facsimile

Application for:

⊗ Type A - Standard (hook and underlift Tow Truck) ⊗ Type B - Heavier Permit (hook and underlift Tow Truck) ⊗ Yes ⊗ No

⊗ Type C - Tilt Deck Tow Truck ⊗ Type D - Low Deck Semi-trailer

Vehicle Details

Vehicle Make | Model | VIN No.

Vehicle Registration Number | State

Manufacturer's Rating | Steer Axle/Group *(tonnes)* | Drive Axle/Group (tonnes) | Trailer Axle Group *(tonnes)*

GVM *(tonnes)* | GCM *(tonnes)*

Tow Truck Type

⊗ Underlift/hook

⊗ Tilt-tray rigid truck

⊗ Prime mover and tilt-deck or low deck semi-trailer
(max 1 metre high deck)

a) Tyres per axle *(insert in circles)*
b) Distance between axle centres *(metres)*
c) Tare mass of each axle/group *(tonnes)*
d) Rear overhang measured from centre of rear axle group to the rear most part of the vehicle/equipment for underlift/hook tow truck *(metres)*

Vehicle Dimensions

Length (m) | Tare Mass (kg)

Payment Details and Declaration

All the information provided is true and correct, noting that any information given or document submitted in connection with this application, or a copy of this application, may be disclosed or used for investigation, law enforcement and other purposes in accordance with the Road Safety Act 1986 or the Accident Towing Services Act 2007.

Applicant's Surname | Given Name

Please charge the permit fee to my ⊗ Mastercard ⊗ Visa ⊗ VicRoads Credit Account No. | Signature

Credit Card No. | VicRoads Credit No.

Name of Cardholder | Date of Expiry D D • M M • Y Y Y Y

Signature of Cardholder

VicRoads, 12 Lakeside Drive, Burwood East 3151 Telephone: (03) 9881 8852 Facsimile: (03) 9881 8854

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For further information please phone **13 11 71**
or visit **vicroads.vic.gov.au**

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State Government Victoria

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