

Land Transport Rule Vehicle Dimensions and Mass

**Preface to Consolidated Rule
with amendments incorporated
as at
15 April 2016**

Note. The consolidation of the Rule and its amendments is intended to provide up-to-date details of the current requirements. It is not the official version of the Rule.

Preface

The consolidated Rule brings together the requirements relating to the dimensions and mass of heavy motor vehicles in the principal Rule and its amendments. These Rules were produced, under an agreement with the Secretary for Transport, by the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) or its predecessor land transport Crown entities. They were signed into law by the Minister of Transport or his or her delegate under the *Land Transport Act 1998*.

The principal Rule

Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Dimensions and Mass 2002 (the Rule), which came into force on 1 July 2002 (except for those provisions with different dates specified in the Rule), specifies requirements for dimension and mass limits for vehicles operating on New Zealand roads. The Rule set in place a regulatory regime so that vehicles, in particular, heavy truck and trailer combinations, are operated safely.

Amendment 1

Following public consultation, the Rule was amended with effect from 15 September 2005 to make changes relating to the definitions of heavy vehicle axles; to clarify the applicable mass limits for axle sets; to ensure that there are clear, consistent and safe requirements covering the towing of motor vehicles that are not trailers; and to clarify the rights of licensed operators of heavy vehicle recovery service vehicles to remove disabled and damaged vehicles from the roadway.

Amendment 2

Following consultation, the Rule was further amended with effect from 29 June 2007. The amendment Rule clarifies requirements relating to travel time restrictions, the displaying of warning devices, limitations on the use of special overdimension vehicle in carrying a divisible load, and a number of other provisions, in some cases, following representations from industry. The amendment Rule also incorporates in the Rule an existing exemption from displaying specific warning devices on mobile crane booms and makes some other minor amendments and corrections.

Amendment 3

Following public consultation, the Rule was amended with effect from 17 January 2008 to allow the wheels of rigid vehicles to extend 25 mm beyond the maximum width. The amendment Rule allows one steering axle in a quad-axle set on a heavy motor vehicle to be locked in the straight-ahead position if the speed of the vehicle is 30 km or more an hour. It also changes the terminology and size used in describing the dimensions of concrete pipes transported as overdimension loads, corrects an error in *Table 6.1* in relation to the size limits of category 3(a) vehicles, and amends the definition of ‘twin-steer axle set’.

Amendment 4

The Rule was amended with effect from 7 May 2009:

- to allow Class TC caravan trailers that are semi-trailers with a gross vehicle mass of 10 tonnes or less to have a rear overhang up to 65% or 4 m, whichever is less; and
- to define ‘caravan trailer’.

Amendment 5

The Rule was amended with effect from 1 May 2010 to improve the productivity of the heavy vehicle fleet so that freight can be moved as efficiently as possible and, where possible, enable a given amount of freight to be carried on fewer vehicles, without reducing the safety of road users.

The amendment Rule also includes a number of other changes that address issues raised by the transport industry or local authorities. The amendment Rule:

- extends the overall length allowed for certain types of ‘rigid bus’ to reflect the dimensions currently permitted for some buses under exemptions;
- allows buses to be fitted with bicycle racks, which may project beyond the allowed overall length or dimension of the vehicle; and
- removes a requirement for verification of certain overdimension farm vehicles that may be excluded from travel time restrictions in the Rule if they are able to travel without projecting outside of the lane they are using.

Amendment 6

Following consultation on amendment proposals in draft *Land Transport Rule: Omnibus Amendment 2010* the Rule was amended with effect from 1 April 2011 to:

- assist logging truck operators in determining that the height of the load on their vehicle complies with the static rollover threshold requirements for ensuring the stability of vehicles operating on New Zealand roads;
- support the changes made in the 2010 amendment Rule to allow rigid buses with an overall length of greater than 12.6 metres and up to 13.5 metres by increasing the allowable maximum dimensions for rear overhang of these buses;
- update the reference to a standard so that it refers to the current version of the standard;
- remove the requirement for revolving beacons to be fitted at night to an overdimension load that is 2.7 metres or less in width on a standard motor vehicle, which will enhance their effectiveness as a road safety measure for all larger motor vehicles that are still required to fit them;
- address an issue of concern for the road transport industry, while maintaining road safety, by removing the requirement for additional lights to be fitted at the front and rear of an overdimension load that is 2.7 metres or less in width on a standard motor vehicle;
- remove the travel time restrictions that apply to overdimension vehicles, or vehicles with overdimension loads, that are required by certain authorities to undertake essential tasks in emergency circumstances;
- update the overdimension motor vehicle specific route restrictions to take into account the building of new and upgraded motorways and changes to traffic control organisations.

Amendment 7

Following consultation on amendment proposals in *Land Transport Rule: Omnibus Amendment 2012*, the Rule was amended with effect from 1 December 2012.

The objective of the amendment Rule was to:

- exclude a camera installed on the exterior of the left hand side of passenger service vehicles from the calculation of the width of the vehicle;
- exclude ferry tie downs from the overall length calculation of a vehicle;
- restrict the application of the requirement for rear underrun protection devices to standard length vehicles;
- remove the requirement for high-productivity motor vehicles that are not limited to specified roads to display a high-productivity motor vehicle (H) sign;
- provide for an alternative positioning of beacons on rear pilot vehicles where roof-mounted beacons are obscured;
- clarify that the maximum height for vehicles using Auckland Harbour Bridge is 4.8 m;

- allow overdimension motor vehicles exceeding 4.7 m in height to use the section of the Auckland Southern Motorway south of Ramarama Interchange.

Amendment 8

Following consultation on amendment proposals in *Land Transport Rule: Agricultural Vehicles Omnibus 2012*, the Rule was amended with effect from 1 June 2013.

The amendment Rule:

- provided for an increase, from three to four metres, in the permitted length of a vehicle's front overhang to reflect the increased length of tractors in the fleet;
- clarified the requirements relating to the need to remove forks and other equipment fitted to the front of an agricultural motor vehicle before it can be operated on road;
- updated terminology in the Vehicle Dimensions and Mass Rule to reflect the changes in the definition of agricultural vehicles;
- clarified that, for maximum visibility, a hazard panel displayed on a vehicle must be attached as close as practicable to the outside edge of the vehicle;
- allowed flexibility in how hazard panels are displayed on a vehicle by providing for an alternative configuration to that in the Vehicle Dimensions and Mass Rule, and for the approval of variations to the hazard panel configurations set out in the Rule;
- provided for parts of an agricultural motor vehicle (including any attachments or implements) that extend beyond the vehicle's maximum front overhang to be painted in high visibility paint as an alternative to displaying a hazard warning panel;
- relaxed the requirements for each vehicle travelling in a convoy of up to three agricultural motor vehicles to be accompanied by pilot vehicles.

Amendment 9

The Rule was amended with effect from 1 January 2014 to make a change consulted on in *Land Transport Rule: Omnibus Amendment 2013* that clarifies that overdimension vehicles exceeding 3.1 metres in width may travel on a section of the Auckland Southern Motorway where alternative routes are not available to them.

Amendment 10

The Rule was amended with effect from 8 July 2015 to:

- create two categories of conditions that apply to permits for overweight and high-productivity motor vehicles (HPMV): critical conditions, which are specified in the Rule, and additional conditions;
- require the permit for an overweight indivisible load to be carried in the vehicle and to be produced on demand to an enforcement officer;
- replace the prescribed permit form with a schedule of requirements for permit forms;
- require a permit to identify the vehicle it applies to and the operator by whom it may be used and provide that any permit that has been altered without authority is invalid;
- clarify the mass limits applying to a vehicle operating under a HPMV permit;
- allow a vehicle with only one motor-driven axle to be issued with a permit if it varies from a specified dimension limit and the gross mass does not exceed 39,000 kg;
- correct minor errors;
- provide weighing tolerances allowing vehicles operating on overweight or HPMV permits to exceed specified mass limits by small amounts.

Amendment 11

The Rule was amended with effect from 1 October 2015 to:

- allow road controlling authorities (including NZ Transport Agency, city or district councils, and Auckland Transport) to issue permits to high capacity urban buses to allow them to exceed the general mass limits for axle sets. The permits will allow the buses to operate at a higher loading capacity on scheduled public transport routes identified by the relevant regional council or equivalent authority;
- set the conditions for the new high capacity urban bus permits;
- clarify that weighing tolerances in the Vehicle Dimensions and Mass Rule apply to all vehicles operating under a permit to exceed general mass limits, including high capacity urban buses.

Amendment 12

The Rule was amended with effect from 15 April 2016 to:

- widen the scope of the current high capacity urban bus permit regime by replacing the defined term, 'high capacity urban bus', with 'passenger service vehicle';
- allow road controlling authorities to issue permits for passenger service vehicles to exceed the general access axle mass limits on specified routes;
- provide for the continuing validity of permits issued for high capacity urban buses.