

Vehicle Dimensions and Mass Rule 2016

What's changed for overdimension vehicles and loads

INFORMATION SHEET

February 2017



Here you'll find a summary of the main changes in the new Vehicle Dimensions and Mass (VDAM) Rule 2016, specific to overdimension vehicles. This will help give you a sense of what the changes mean for you and others you work with in the industry.

Please refer to the VDAM Rule 2016 as your main source of information, to ensure you know and understand all the details and specified requirements of how you can legally operate.

BEFORE YOU MAKE ANY CHANGES OR DECISIONS

It's important to remember that the VDAM Rule 2016 is intended to set a reasonable balance between road safety, productivity and managing New Zealand's road infrastructure. If you are thinking of changing your fleet, we encourage you to gather information that helps you make decisions and obtain a permit if required.

MANAGING OVERDIMENSION LOADS

If you are involved with operating overdimension loads, you should familiarise yourself with changes to the way the loads must be managed. The changes provide clarification on roles and responsibilities, including new obligations for operators and pilots.

The changes are in place to reflect the difficulty in moving overdimension loads while catering for the safety of other road users and the road infrastructure (ie bridges, road signs, tunnels, toll roads).

Operators of very large overdimension vehicles will be required to state that the route has been assessed and can be safely managed. The permit issuing officer may ask you for further detail on mitigation measures to manage the load through difficult areas, ie narrow bridges and roads.

You should also be aware of a new responsibility added to section 6.31 of the VDAM Rule. The person in control of an overdimension vehicle or load must assign an on-road supervisor for larger loads, to ensure the journey is completed as per the permit conditions and route.

Signage and lighting

You'll also find a number of changes to signage and lighting details. These changes reflect new technologies available and are a tidy-up of requirements that are no longer relevant or needed clarification ie allowing pilots to use sound warning devices.

MANAGEMENT OF OVERDIMENSION LOADS

	RULE REFERENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow the NZ Transport Agency to check breaches of any permits previously issued and traffic offending history when considering a permit application. Indicate matters that may be included as conditions. Clarify the responsibilities of operators and pilots. Allow crane booms to be disassembled and moved as an overdimension load. 	Section 6

DETAILS OF THE PERMIT PROCESS

It is important that road safety remains a priority, therefore the overdimension permit application process includes an operator safety check which looks at traffic offence history, including permit breaches. Declining or placing conditions on a permit based on operator compliance history is at the permit issuing officer's discretion. You are encouraged to familiarise yourself with the revised *Permit manual* (once available) for all the details and requirements.

CRITICAL CONDITIONS

Critical conditions (width, provision of pilots) now apply for overdimension permits and are found in section 6.53 of the rule. Please be aware that if you breach these conditions, higher penalties (\$2000 for an infringement) will apply – as detailed in the updated Land Transport (Offences and Penalties) Regulations 1999. A breach of any other conditions incurs the existing (\$370) fine.

CHANGES TO PILOTING

If you are a pilot driver, you play an important role in keeping the roads safe during the movement of overdimension vehicles and loads. Below are two of the main changes for pilots. However, there are a number of small changes that you should be aware of. We encourage you to read the relevant sections (6.41 to 6.47 in the rule) so you know the full details.

PILOTING	
	RULE REFERENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow vehicles to travel in convoy, subject to piloting and traffic flow requirements. Remove limitation on tyre rim size for class 2 pilot vehicles. 	Section 6.36

TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

Changes to travel zones and motorway restrictions reflect how road layouts are now developed and used. Please read section 6.20–6.29 of the rule to see when you can operate an overdimension vehicle or load and the permissions required ie when using toll roads.

WEIGHING TOLERANCES AND WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COMPLIANCE

It's important you are aware of the revised tolerances to ensure you remain compliant and help maintain safety on the road. All mass tolerances are now consolidated in the Land Transport (Offences and Penalties) Regulations 1999. The changes to weighing tolerances reflect the accuracy of modern weighing techniques and technologies.

The Commercial Vehicle Investigation Unit (CVIU) has updated their enforcement processes and procedures to reflect these regulation changes.

WEIGHING TOLERANCES	
REDUCED TO (for all vehicles)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500kg for all individual axles and gross mass limits. 1000kg for axle sets (eg a tri-axle set at the rear of a semi-trailer) other than steer axles. 	



WHAT'S HAPPENING AFTER 1 FEBRUARY 2017

For more details on changes coming into effect after 1 February 2017, please refer to the *VDAM Overview of changes for the industry* summary guide available at nzta.govt.nz/vdamrule2016

REFERENCE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A number of documents are being updated to reflect the revised rule.

Please visit www.nzta.govt.nz/vdamrule2016 for more information.



WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please check our website nzta.govt.nz/vdamrule2016 for more information, including the VDM Rule 2016 and revised documents.

If you have any questions regarding how the rule impacts your work, you can send enquiries to:

- Permitting/overdimension/specialist vehicles/network access: frr@nzta.govt.nz
- Vehicle questions: Andrew.Hilson@nzta.govt.nz
- Temporary RUC rates: RUCAssessments@nzta.govt.nz