

Vehicle Standards Guide 19 (VSG-19)

Vehicle warning signs (LONG VEHICLE and ROAD TRAIN)

Revised August 2025

This guide provides advice to heavy vehicle owners and operators about the requirements and specifications for vehicle warning signs for combinations longer than 22m.

Introduction

Heavy vehicle combinations that are longer than 22m are required to display warning signs. The purpose of these signs is to advise other road users that the combination is longer than they may be aware. This information allows other drivers to adjust their behaviour, for example, by allowing more time when overtaking.

In December 2019, amendments to the *Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulations* were made to simplify the requirements, with the transition period ending on 9 December 2021.

Current requirements

The requirements under the National Regulation states:

Warning signs for combinations longer than 22m -

- (1) A combination longer than 22m, but not longer than 30m, must display a long vehicle warning sign at its rear.
- (2) A combination longer than 30m must display a road train warning sign at its front and rear.

This means that regardless of the types of trailers in the combination, other road users can readily identify the length of the vehicle. These requirements are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Warning sign requirements

Combination length	Warning Sign	
	Long vehicle	Road train
Longer than 22m - but not longer than 30m	✓	
Over 30m long		✓

Road rules, speed limits, and road access

The changes to the warning signs do not impact other road rules such as speed limits or access requirements.

Speed limits for larger heavy vehicle combinations such as B-doubles and road trains are set by the road rules applicable to the jurisdiction. These limits are determined by the configuration and not the length alone.

Larger heavy vehicle combinations continue to be restricted access vehicles which means they must obtain a specific authority or exemption to access the road network e.g. Access notice, Permit or PBS approval.

Vehicles operating under a specific authority or exemption must comply with all conditions detailed in the authority or exemption.

Specifications for warning signs

There are very specific requirements for warning signs that include their size, material, colour and fonts. These requirements have not changed, and operators will be able to continue using their existing signs.

Note: Amendments to the *Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation*, were introduced in July 2018, which allowed warning signs to be made from flexible material.

Table 2 details the specifications for warning signs and Appendix 1 provides examples.

There are some basic requirements that must be met when positioning a warning sign on a vehicle. The warning sign must:

- be affixed to the front and the rear of the combination for a vehicle that requires **road train** warning signs
- be affixed to the rear of the combination for a vehicle that requires a **long vehicle** warning sign
- be displayed so that the entire sign is visible

- be maintained so that it can be easily read by other road users
- be affixed or attached to the vehicle so that it does not furl, fold up, flap or warp under any operating condition
- have the bottom edge of the warning sign at least 500mm above the ground
- have the top edge of the warning sign no more than 1.8m above the ground
- be installed horizontally.

If a two-part warning sign is used:

- for a **long vehicle** warning sign, the part on the left must show the word 'LONG' and the part on the right must show the word 'VEHICLE'
- for a **road train** warning sign, the part on the left must show the word 'ROAD' and the part on the right must show the word 'TRAIN'
- both parts of the sign must be installed at the same height above the ground.

Table 2: Long vehicle and road train warning sign specifications

Material	Suitable for the intended use on the vehicle
Reflective	A yellow surface complying with Class 400 (previously known as class 1) or Class 100 (previously known as class 2) specification of Australian Standard 1906 <i>Retroreflective Materials and Devices for Road Traffic Control Purposes</i>
Dimensions (minimum)	1020mm long 250mm high
Wording	Letters must be a minimum of 180mm high Black capital letters in typeface Series B(N) complying with AS 1744 <i>Forms of Letters and Numerals for Road Signs</i>
Border	Around outside of sign Note: a sign in two parts can have, but does not require, a border between the two parts.

Chain of Responsibility

The primary duty requires [Chain of Responsibility](#) parties to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that they carry out their transport activities in a way that ensures public safety when heavy vehicles are used on a road.

Keeping up to date with vehicle standards and implementing them in your fleet is one part of your transport activities.

Complying with the national heavy vehicle safety standards

The operator of a heavy vehicle must ensure that their vehicle complies with the relevant *Australian Design Rules* (ADRs) and the *Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation*. Using or permitting another person to use a defective heavy vehicle on a road is an offence.

A defective heavy vehicle is a vehicle that:

- does not comply with the heavy vehicle safety standards; or
- has a part that does not perform its intended function; or
- has deteriorated to an extent that it cannot be reasonably relied on to perform its intended function.

Penalties can include on-the-spot fines or prosecution. Formal warnings or a defect notice may also be issued. More information can be found at [Heavy vehicle defects](#) | NHVR.

For more information:

Visit: www.nhvr.gov.au/vehiclestandards
 Subscribe: www.nhvr.gov.au/subscribe
 Email: vehiclestandards@nhvr.gov.au
 Phone: 13 NHVR (13 64 87)*

*Standard 13 call charges apply. Please check with your phone provider.
 © Copyright National Heavy Vehicle Regulator 2025, creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/au
 Disclaimer: This information is only a guide and should not be relied upon as legal advice.

VSG-19 Revision history

First Published	Dec 2017	
Revised	June 2018	Minor Review
Revised	Nov 2019	Major Review
Revised	Nov 2019	Minor Review
Revised	Jan 2020	Minor Review
Revised	Dec 2021	Major Review
Revised	Aug 2025	Minor Review

Appendix 1: Examples

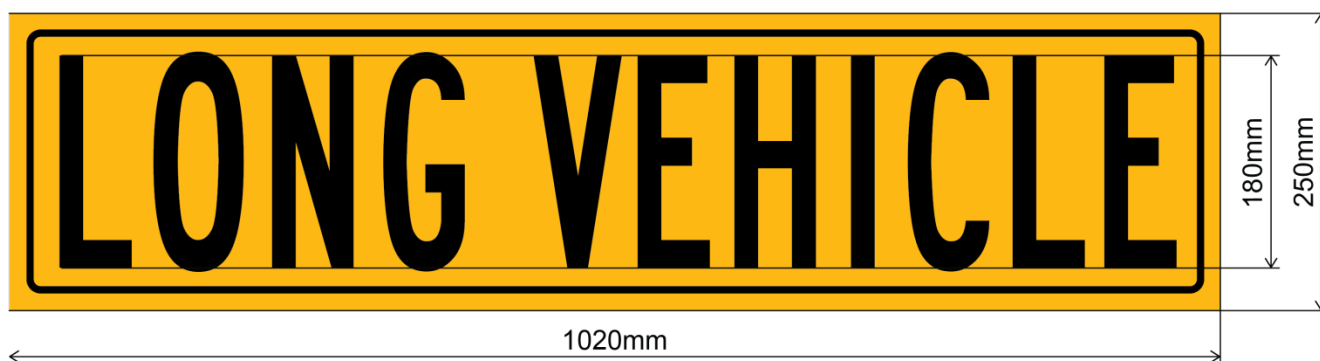


Figure 1: Long vehicle warning signs

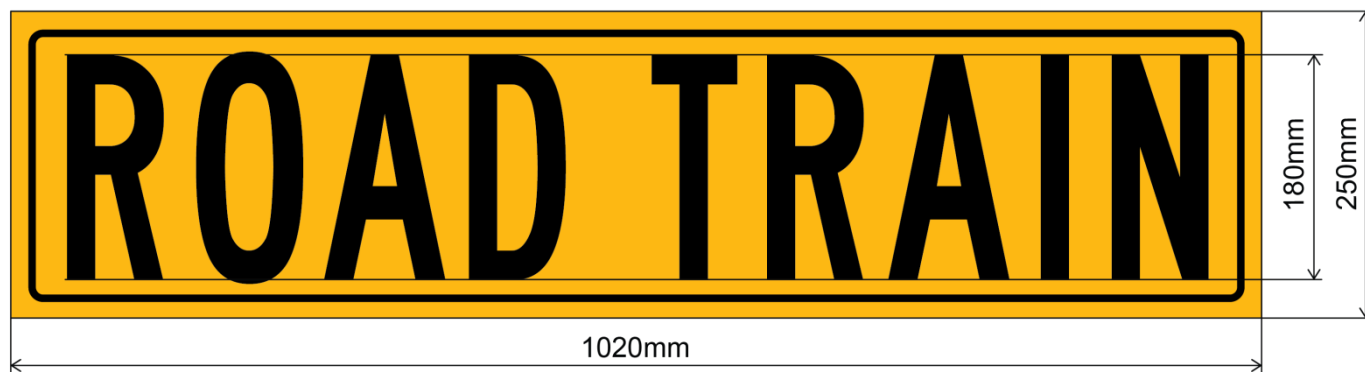


Figure 2: Road train warning signs