



Mass, Dimension and Loading changes – Fact sheet

Expected commencement – July 2026

22 April 2026



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This fact sheet is provided for general guidance only and does not substitute the Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2025 (HVNL), the Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation 2025, or any applicable Notices or Permits.

Commencement of the HVNL is intended for July 2026, subject to Ministerial approval.

Purpose

The Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Act 2025 (HVNL) is scheduled to commence on 1 July 2026, subject to Ministerial approval.

The Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Amendment Regulation (MDL Regulation) 2025 will set out the mass and dimension limits that apply to heavy vehicles operating under the law.

Key changes to the MDL Regulation include:

- Increase in General Mass Limits (GML) to align with the limits that currently apply under Concessional Mass Limits (CML)
- Expansion of Euro VI concessions to road trains
- Increase in the length limit for heavy vehicles from 19 metres to 20 metres
- Amendments to the tow mass ratio and associated conditions for tag trailers

This fact sheet is intended to inform operators and road managers about the changes that will be introduced by the new MDL Regulation, and the key actions required to comply with these changes.

Key changes

Mass limit changes expected July 2026

The key change to the MDL Regulation will increase the General Mass Limits (GML) to align with the masses provided under Concessional Mass Limits (CML).

Under the new MDL Regulation:

- Overall mass increase will provide the following increase on existing GML weights:
 - A maximum of 1t for a vehicle or combination with an allowable gross mass not exceeding 55t.
 - A maximum of 2t for vehicle combinations with an allowable gross mass exceeding 55t
- The 5 per cent gross mass restriction and ‘one tonne tri-axle mass transfer allowance’ will be removed.
- There will be no increases for bus axle group limits (consistent with the current CML).
- Road trains with a Euro VI compliant prime mover will receive an increase of 0.5 tonnes to a maximum of 7.0 tonnes.

A Euro VI vehicle (complying steer axle) must:

1. Comply with ADR 80/04 or later
2. Have a front underrun protection device as ADR 84
3. Have a cabin that complies with UN ECE regulation 29
4. Be appropriately rated by the vehicle manufacturer
5. Have a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) of 15t or more

- Mass Management Accreditation is no longer required to operate under these masses at general access.
- **Note:** Mass Management Accreditation* will still be required to access certain notices and permits including Higher Mass Limits (HML) and the Performance Based Standards (PBS) scheme. A list of these notices and permits is available on the NHVR website: [Notices requiring Mass Accreditation | NHVR](#)

***Mass Management Accreditation is transitioning to a new model called Alternative Compliance Accreditation (ACA) - Mass:**

The National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme (NHVAS) will transition to the Heavy Vehicle Accreditation (HVA) scheme following the implementation of the Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Act 2025. Current NHVAS operators



can access transition options to help prepare for the new scheme. For further information, please see [NHVAS transition to HVA scheme](#).

Tables 1 and 2 provide total vehicle general mass limits under the amended MDL Regulation compared to the previous limits.

Table 1. New mass limits – Expected July 2026

Axle group/Combination	Current GML (t)	Current CML (t)	Future GML (t) (expected July 26)
Single steer axle	6.0	6.0	6.0
Tandem drive axle group	16.5	17.0	17.0
Tri-axle group (non-pig trailer)	20.0	21.0	21.0
Quad-axle group (single tyres <375mm)	15.0	15.5	15.5
Quad-axle group (single tyres >375mm)	20.0	21.0	21.0
Axle groups of 5 or more (low loader with single tyres <375mm)	15.0	15.5	15.5
Axle groups of 5 or more (any rear group on a low loader)	20.0	21.0	21.0
Complying steer axle vehicle that is neither a B-double nor a road train	43.0	-	44.0
Prime mover with a twinsteer axle group towing a tri-axle semitrailer	46.5	-	47.5
Vehicle that is not mentioned above and that is neither a B-double nor a road train	42.5	-	43.5

Table 2. New Euro VI mass limits – Expected July 2026

Vehicle/Combination	Current limit (t)	Future limit (t) (from July 2026)
Euro VI single steer axle	6.5	7.0
Euro VI vehicle (complying steer axle) that is neither a B-double nor a road train)	43.5	44.5
Euro VI vehicle (single steer axle) that is neither a B-double nor a road train	43.0	44.0
Euro VI vehicle (twinsteer) that is a prime mover with a twinsteer axle group towing a tri-axle semi-trailer)	7.0	48.0

Note: The loaded mass of a vehicle must not exceed the manufacturer’s rating, particularly the Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) for a rigid vehicle or the Gross Combination Mass (GCM) for combinations or Aggregate Trailer Mass (ATM) for trailers. The manufacturer’s mass rating on any component, such as a tow coupling, tyre, wheel or axle, must not be exceeded.



Length limit changes expected July 2026

The MDL Regulation will increase the length of certain heavy vehicle combinations from 19 to 20 metres.

These combinations include:

- prime mover and semitrailer,
- rigid truck and pig trailer*
- rigid truck and dog trailer*, and
- rigid truck and tag trailer* combinations.

*The increase in overall length for these combinations is provided for the truck length only, there are no changes to existing trailer dimensional limits in the MDL Regulation.

All trailers in a 20m combination with a Gross Trailer Mass over 10 tonnes (ADR category TD) must be fitted with braking systems compliant with ADR 38/05 or later, and the braking system must be powered by the towing vehicle.

Table 3 provides total vehicle length limits, and allowable prime mover semitrailer combinations under the amended MDL Regulation.

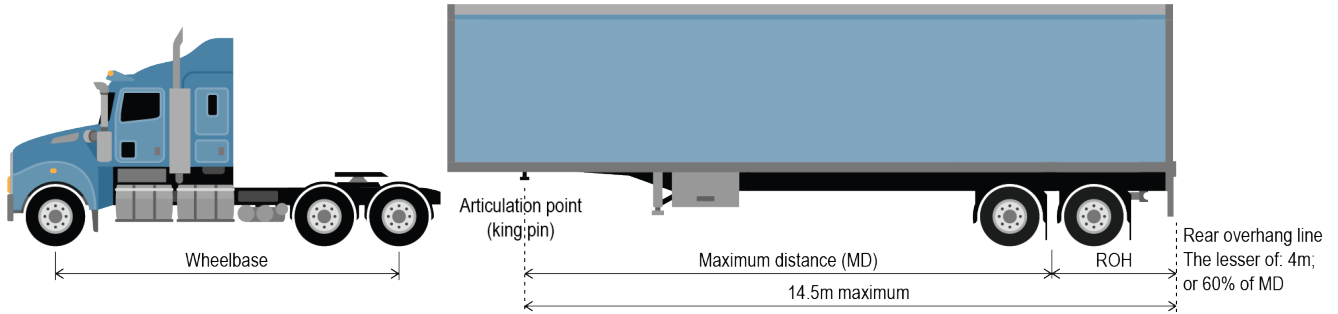
Table 3. Length limit adjustments from July 2026

Parameter	Current limit (m)	Future limit (m) (from July 2026)
General access vehicle length (applies to prime mover and semitrailer/low loader, rigid truck and trailer, etc.).	19.0	20.0
Rear overhang (semitrailer).	3.7	4.0
Maximum distance, front articulation to centreline of rear axle group (prime mover and semitrailer).	9.5	10.5
Maximum distance, front articulation to rear of trailer (prime mover and semitrailer).	12.3	14.5

Figure 1 (below) explains the expected MDL Regulation revised length limit to 20 metres for a truck and trailer.

Example - Figure 1. Trailer length example

The wheelbase of the truck is 4.1m. The maximum distance can be 10.4m. The trailer must have Side Underrun Protection. The rear overhang must be the smallest dimension between 4.0m or 60% of the maximum distance



Wheelbase (m)		Minimum distance (m)
At least	Less than	
3.5	4.1	10.5
4.1	4.3	10.4
4.3	4.4	10.3
4.4	4.6	10.2
4.6	4.8	10.1
4.8	4.9	10.0
4.9	5.1	9.9
5.1	5.2	9.8
5.2	5.4	9.7
5.4	5.5	9.6
5.5	5.6	9.5
5.6	5.8	9.4
5.8	5.9	9.3
5.9	6.0	9.2
6.0	6.2	9.1
6.2	6.3	9.0
6.3	6.4	8.9
6.4	6.5	8.8
6.5	6.6	8.7
6.6	-	8.6

The vehicle must be fitted with Side Underrun Protection as per ADR106.

Tow mass ratio and tag trailers amendments expected from July 2026

The MDL Regulation will remove the previously prescribed 1:1 tow mass ratio.

- The new tow mass ratio requirement will be 1:1.3.

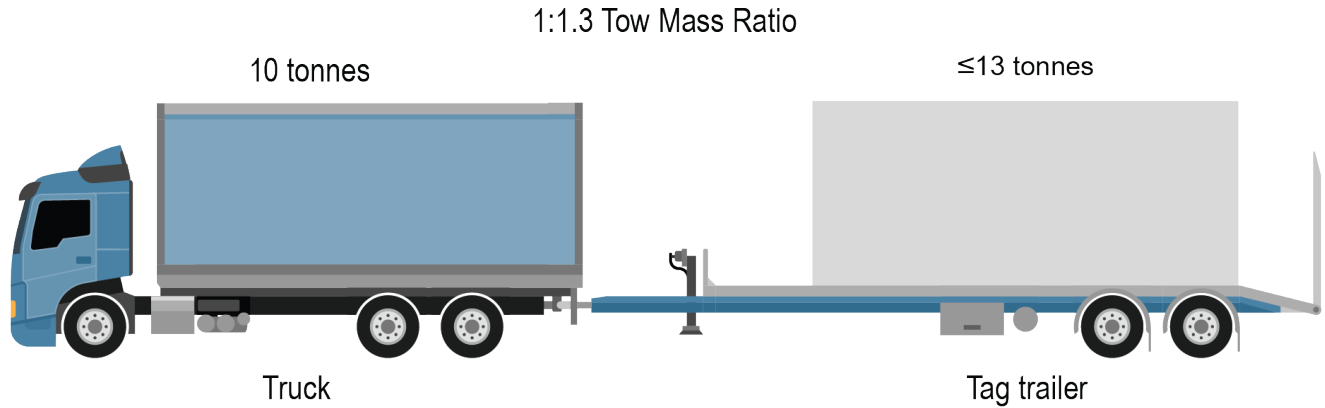


Figure 2. A simplified example of the tag trailer ratio proposal

- In a combination –
 - There is a requirement to maintain a minimum mass on the steer or twin-steer axles to ensure safe steering of the combination.
 - This means that the minimum mass on the steer or twin steer axles must be greater than —
 - the sum of all the axles in the combination; and
 - the vehicle’s manufacturer recommendation.

Case	Maximum tow mass ratio of all cases: 1:1:3	Minimum 20% GVM steer mass required (t)	Assessed steer mass (t)	Drive mass (t)	Trailer mass (t)	Total mass (t)
1-2		2.5	5.0	7.6	16.4	29.0
1-3		2.7	4.7	9.0	17.8	31.5
2-2		2.5	4.5	8.2	16.5	29.2
2-3		3.1	3.5	11.9	20.0	35.4

Important advice to consider

Operators

Operators should consider the actions listed below prior to operating under the new limits that are expected in the MDL Regulation:

- **Check vehicle configuration** - Confirm GVM/GCM, wheelbase, rear overhang (S length) and tyre section widths match new tables.
- **Semitrailer S length** - Ensure S (front articulation to rear overhang) complies with the Length Limit (Table 3) for your prime mover wheelbase.
- **Braking requirement** - Heavy trailers used in combinations >19 m and ≤20 m must have braking that complies with ADR 38/05 and be powered by the towing vehicle.
- **Side underrun protection** - Trailers with S > 9.5 m must meet ADR106/00 side underrun protection.
- **Euro VI allowance** - Euro VI prime movers may be eligible for +0.5 t drive axle transfer where a corresponding steer/twin steer reduction and tyre/manufacture conditions are met.
- **Load calculations** - Apply the new Axle Mass Deduction values when calculating allowable loads and the vehicle's reduced mass amount.
- **Update documentation** — Revise load plans, mass calculations and compliance records before operating under new limits.

Road managers

The MDL Regulation changes do not automatically expand network access and existing road manager decisions will be preserved. The MDL changes affect the regulatory baseline.

There are no changes to road manager authority and the administrative processes regarding consent. Road managers will continue to retain their existing authority regarding:

- access to local road networks,
- infrastructure protection
- conditions placed on heavy vehicle access.

Many notices will be updated administratively to align to the new MDL settings, this includes removing references to Concessional Mass Limits (CML) and updating terminology.

Where a notice is substantially affected by MDL regulatory changes, the NHVR will engage with relevant road managers through the standard consent process.

About the NHVR

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) is Australia's dedicated independent regulator for heavy vehicles over 4.5t gross vehicle mass. The NHVR was created to administer one set of rules for heavy vehicles under the Heavy Vehicle National Law, improve safety and productivity, minimize the compliance burden on the heavy vehicle transport industry and reduce duplication and inconsistencies across state and territory borders.

For more information:

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Phone: 13 NHVR (13 64 87)*

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