

Higher Mass Limits (HML)

What is HML?

Higher Mass Limits (HML) allows particular heavy vehicles to access additional mass entitlements providing:

- › operators of vehicles or combinations running HML on triaxle groups are accredited under the Mass Management Module of the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme (NHVAS), with an accreditation label fitted to the hauling unit
- › vehicles are fitted with certified road friendly suspension
- › vehicles are on an authorised HML route.

HML provides a significant increase in the productivity of road freight transport vehicles.

Road friendly suspension

To be eligible for HML, vehicles must be fitted with certified road friendly suspensions. Road friendly suspension systems reduce the impact of laden axles on road pavements and most bridge structures.

For a suspension system to be considered as road friendly, and therefore eligible for HML, it must be certified to the requirements stipulated under Department of Transport and Regional Services - Vehicle Safety Standards, *Vehicle Standards Bulletin 11 – Certification of Road Friendly Suspensions*.

A list of certified road friendly suspension systems is available on the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure and Transport's website at www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/vehicle_regulation/suspension.aspx

What are the higher mass limits set out under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL)?

Below are standard axle mass limit increases for vehicles fitted with certified road friendly suspensions.

Before operating under HML, it is strongly recommended that you check with the relevant road and transport authorities to ensure that you conform to potential minor variations from the national policy.

Table I.O

| Type of axle group | Maximum mass (tonnes) permitted under GML | Maximum mass (tonnes) permitted under HML |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Tandem axle group | 16.5t | 17t |
| Tri-axle group | 20.0t | 22.5t |
| Single drive axles on buses | 9.0t | 10.0t |
| Six tyred tandem axle groups | 13.0t | 14.0t |

Intelligence Access Program (IAP)

IAP is a national program developed in partnership with all Australian road agencies. It uses satellite tracking and wireless communication technology to remotely monitor where, when, and how heavy vehicles are being operated on the road network.

In Queensland and New South Wales transport operators running HML must participate in IAP. For more information about the requirements of IAP, please refer to the IAP fact sheet via our website www.nhvr.gov.au.

Authorised routes

When operating at higher mass limits, operators must ensure that the route is authorised for their particular vehicle. The NHVR Journey Planner is an interactive online map service which displays authorised routes for use by heavy vehicles.

The Journey Planner is now available and will initially display authorised routes for:

- › B-double
- › B-triple
- › HML
- › Performance Based Standards (PBS)
- › road trains
- › some commodity routes.

Additional networks will be added as the Journey Planner is further developed, following consultation with industry and road managers.

Operators can use the Journey Planner to help plan a heavy vehicle journey and identify where an access permit may be required and if an application may need to be made. Journeys can be saved or printed out and attached to applications for an access permit.

The authorised routes displayed on the NHVR Journey Planner are merely indicative and provided for your convenience and do not replace authorised routes and conditions given in notices authorised under the HVNL. More information about the Journey Planner can be found at: www.nhvr.gov.au/road-access/journey-planner

What do operators do if they want access to an area or road not listed in a notice?

The NHVR will coordinate access applications from start to finish, liaising directly with road managers (both state and territory road authorities and local government) to manage applications and, if approved, issue permits or add roads to the list of authorised roads in a notice.

State, territory and local governments will continue to make route assessments and decisions regarding access.

Where an operator wishes to seek expanded HML access, they must apply to the NHVR, for a permit to access routes outside of the authorised route. Application forms are available via the NHVR website: www.nhvr.gov.au

NHVR will co-ordinate this process ie gain consent from local asset owners (e.g. local councils) for the use of HML vehicle(s) on their assets on a route-by-route basis.

The asset owner, when assessing a route will examine it to ensure there are no vulnerable assets (such as bridges, culverts, and pavements) present.

Do drivers still need to stick to the existing authorised routes listed in state and territory notices?

The HML network for all jurisdictions will not change as a result of the HVNL. However, any request for additional routes will require a permit application submitted to the NHVR.

Will operators lose access to any currently authorised roads under the new arrangements?

No. As part of the transition arrangements, no existing authorised roads will be removed from the network.

What if an operator wants to use an HML vehicle configuration outside of their operating state, that is not currently covered under a notice?

An operator can apply to the NHVR to have the configuration assessed and if eligible a HML permit will be issued.

About the NHVR

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) is Australia's dedicated independent regulator for heavy vehicles over 4.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass.

The NHVR was created to administer one set of rules for heavy vehicles under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL), improve safety and productivity, minimise 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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