Information Sheet

Multiple Loads on Class 1 Load-Carrying Vehicles

Purpose
To clarify the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) requirements when transporting more than one large indivisible item or other goods with a large indivisible item on Class 1 load-carrying vehicles.

Definitions
A class 1 heavy vehicle is one that due to its construction or when carrying a large indivisible item, does not comply with a prescribed mass or dimension requirement applying to it. These include oversize overmass vehicles, special purpose vehicles and agricultural vehicles.

E.g. a common class 1 heavy vehicle is a combination of a prime mover towing a low loader (i.e. a load-carrying vehicle).

Large indivisible item means an item that:
(a) cannot be divided without extreme effort, expense or risk of damage to it; and
(b) cannot be carried on any heavy vehicle without contravening a mass requirement or dimension requirement.

Load-carrying vehicle means a heavy vehicle carrying, or designed for the purpose of carrying, a large indivisible item, including, for example, a combination including a low loader.

Please note:
• There are a number of class 1 notices that authorise the use of oversize overmass vehicles that do not comply with prescribed mass or dimension requirements. The following can be found here www.nhvr.gov.au/road-access/access-management/applications/oversize-overmass-permit
• If your oversize overmass heavy vehicle is not exempted from prescribed mass or dimension requirements by an existing class 1 notice, you are required to obtain a permit from the NHVR.

Requirements for Carrying Multiple Items
Under Schedule 8, Part 1, Division 2, and Section 13 of the Regulation:

(1) A load-carrying vehicle must not carry more than 1 large indivisible item unless:
   (a) the vehicle together with its load complies with the general mass limits; and
   (b) the vehicle carrying more than 1 large indivisible item does not cause the vehicle together with its load to exceed a prescribed dimension requirement that would not be exceeded if the vehicle carried only 1 of the large indivisible items.

(2) A load-carrying vehicle carrying 1 or more large indivisible items must not carry any other goods unless:
   (a) the vehicle together with its load complies with the general mass limits; and
   (b) the other goods are contained within the limits set by the prescribed dimension requirements.

Additional Indivisible items must not be loaded:
(a) side by side if the resulting width exceeds 2.5 metres;
(b) one on top of another if the resulting height exceeds 4.3 metres; or
(c) one behind another if the resulting length (from front of the vehicle to the rear of the load) exceeds 19 metres for a combination or 12.5 metres for a rigid vehicle
(d) if the additional indivisible item causes the vehicle to exceed general mass limits.

Loading Requirements
The following principles are applicable to Class 1 load-carrying vehicles:
• A load on a heavy vehicle must not be placed in a way that makes the vehicle unstable or unsafe.
• A load on a heavy vehicle must be secured so it is unlikely to fall or be dislodged from the vehicle.
• An appropriate method must be used to restrain the load on a heavy vehicle.
• If a load can be safely loaded in more than one way, it must be loaded in a way that minimises the safety risks (such as width) of the vehicle or combination.
Complying

The following scenarios are combinations that may operate under existing exemption notices or permit.

- It is important to note that some states and territories may provide different exemptions under notices and permits.
- For all the example scenarios below, general mass limits cannot be exceeded.

Example 1

Example 2

*This example has excess length, but may be eligible to operate under an existing notice or permit.

Example 3

Example 4
Non-Complying

The following scenarios do not comply with the requirements of Schedule 8 of the Regulation, as a prescribed dimension limit has been exceeded by additional loading.

(a) The additional large indivisible item causes the prescribed length of 19 metres to be exceeded.

Example 1

Example 2

(b) The additional loading (general freight) is not contained within the limits set by the prescribed dimension requirements. The prescribed length dimension of 19 metres is exceeded.
Example 3

(c) The additional loading (second dozer) is contained within prescribed length limit of 19m, but general mass limits are exceeded.

Example 4

Loading Restraint Guide

The Load Restraint Guide 2018 provides drivers, owners, operators, freight consigners, vehicle manufacturers, equipment manufacturers and suppliers with the basic safety principles that should be followed when designing a load restraint system to ensure the safe and efficient transportation of loads.


Contact the NHVR

If operators have any further queries regarding the content of this information sheet, the NHVR may be contacted using the details below.

For more information
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