

Updates to the PBS pre-advised design approval process

This information sheet provides guidance about the extension of the PBS pre-advised design approval process to include qualifying B-double combinations up to 30m and broaden the scope of pre-advised specifications for truck and 3- or 4-axle dog and prime mover and semitrailer combinations.

Introduction

The *Heavy Vehicle National Law* requires any application for a PBS Design Approval to be submitted to the PBS Review Panel (the Panel) for review and advice. To simplify this approval process, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) ran a trial that allowed some well-known PBS designs to be 'pre-advised' by the Panel. This allowed the NHVR to assess and issue a Design Approval without submitting the application to the Panel.

A pre-advised design approval trial was initially introduced in March 2017. The process was later reviewed by the Panel who concluded that the process was robust and offers substantial benefits.

To date, most major combination designs have been pre-advised by the Panel; it is estimated that 90% of all PBS design applications will qualify for approval under the simplified pre-advised design approval process.

Since the commencement of the pre-advised design approval trial in March 2017, application processing times for applicable vehicle types have reduced on average from 4 weeks to three business days.

Qualifying combinations

The following types of PBS combinations are currently eligible to access the pre-advised approval process:

- Level 1, 3- or 4-axle truck and 3- or 4-axle dog combinations up to 20m long and 50.5t GCM
- Level 2, 3- or 4-axle truck and 3- or 4-axle dog combinations up to 20m long and 62t GCM
- Level 2, 3- or 4-axle truck and 5- or 6-axle dog combinations up to 26m long and 73t GCM
- Level 1, 3- or 4-axle prime mover and single, tandem, tri or quad-axle semitrailer combinations up to 20m long and 50.5t GCM
- Level 1, B-doubles fitted with tandem or tri-axle groups up to 20m long and 50.5t GCM
- Level 2, B-doubles fitted with tandem or tri-axle groups up to 26m long and 68.5t GCM

From 1 April 2019, the following additional combination types will also be eligible to access this process:

- Level 2, A-doubles with single, tandem or tri-axle semitrailers and tandem or tri-axle dollies up to 30m long and 85t GCM
- Level 3, A-doubles up to 36.5m long and 95.5t GCM.
- Level 2, 3- or 4-axle truck and 3- or 4-axle dog combinations up to 26m long and 62t GCM
- Level 2, 3- or 4-axle prime mover and tri or quad-axle semitrailer combinations up to 26m long and 55t GCM
- Level 1, B-doubles fitted with single, tandem, tri or quad-axle groups up to 20m long and 50.5t GCM
- Level 2 or Level 3, B-doubles fitted with single, tandem, tri, or quad-axle groups up to 30m long and 82t GCM

Note that combinations seeking Level 1 approval will remain restricted to a maximum of 20m and 50.5t.

Non-qualifying combinations

The following are excluded from the pre-advised process:

- 6-axle Dog combinations not complying with X-Y Rule (also commonly known as the clear spacing rule) as defined in Schedule 6, Section 10 of the *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation*.
- Tri-Tri, Quad-Tri, and Quad-Quad B-double combinations not complying with X-Y Rule (also commonly known as the clear spacing rule) as defined in Schedule 6, Section 10 of the *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation*.
- combinations carrying dangerous goods
- combinations requiring exemption under section 8 (noncompliance with infrastructure standards) and/or section 9 (noncompliance that poses no additional risk) of the *Heavy Vehicle (General) National Regulation*
- drive axle groups other than tandem-axles

Combinations types that fall under one of the above exclusions will be processed via the ordinary PBS design approval process, which requires submission to the Panel.

Panel objections

It must be noted that the Panel may object or advise against an application that was approved under the pre-advised design approval process, even though a Design Approval has been issued. In this case, the NHVR may have to revoke the approval and the application be redirected to go through the ordinary design approval process. Modifications to pre-advised design approvals

Modifications to pre-advised Design Approvals outside of the pre-advised specifications will be processed in accordance with the ordinary design approval process.

Changes to the PBS Design Approval Application Form – Part A

PBS Design Approval Application Form – Part A has been updated to accommodate the additional types of PBS combinations included in the pre-advised process.

Part A update summary

- updated pre-advised specifications for B-double combinations
- updated pre-advised specifications for 3- or 4-axle truck and 3- or 4-axle dog combinations
- updated pre-advised specifications for prime mover and semitrailer combinations

Design Approval Application forms can be found on the NHVR's website at <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/road-access/performance-based-standards/application-process-and-forms>.

Lodging a design application to the NHVR

When lodging a design approval application, the assessor is to indicate that an application qualifies for the pre-advised design approval process by:

- including '(PA)' for pre-advised in the subject line and the body of the email; and
- selecting 'Yes' in the appropriate pre-advised specifications table in the PBS Design Approval Application Form – Part A.

Implementation

Applications can be made under the new process from 1 April 2019.

For more information:

Visit: www.nhvr.gov.au
Subscribe: www.nhvr.gov.au/subscribe
Email: info@nhvr.gov.au
Phone: 1300 MYNHVR* (1300 696 487)

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