

## Vehicle Standards Guide 30 (VSG-30)

### Vehicle Mounted Lifting Systems – Width Requirements

This guide provides information for Approved Vehicle Examiners (AVEs) and owners modifying heavy vehicles by the addition of lifting equipment.

This guide only applies to vehicles that meet all dimension and loading requirements for a general access vehicle prior to the fitting of a vehicle mounted lifting system (VMLS).

#### Background

Vehicle mounted lifting systems (VMLS), as the name suggests, are lifting system or cranes that are fitted to a regular cab-chassis vehicle to assist in the loading and unloading of the vehicle.

These vehicles must meet all requirements of the *Heavy Vehicle National Law* (HVNL), the associated Regulations and all relevant Australian Design Rules (ADRs) both before and after the vehicle has been modified.

Most cranes and lifting systems fitted to heavy vehicles in Australia are sourced from European markets where vehicle width requirements are different. It is important when designing and installing a lifting system to a vehicle that careful consideration is given to the width of the modified vehicle.

Vehicles that do not comply with the dimension limits stated in the *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation* (MDL) cannot be signed off by an AVE under Section R – Vehicle Mounted Lifting Systems of Vehicle Standards Bulletin 6 (VSB6).

Previously, this meant that systems that could not be reduced to meet the 2.5m regulatory width requirement could not be certified and were unable to access the road network. However, recent changes to the HVNL allow vehicles approved to PBS Level 1 general access to the road network as a *'Specified PBS Vehicle'*.

These changes provide a practical alternative for operators where the width of a VMLS cannot be reduced.

#### Approval options for VMLS

To assist AVEs and owners in gaining approval for the modified vehicle, the NHVR has identified the following options:

- Reduce overall width
- Pass PBS Level 1 Assessment

#### Reduce overall width

Where possible, the best course of action is to reduce the overall width of the modified vehicle. By reducing the dimensions to align with the MDL requirements, the modification can be approved by an AVE and the vehicle will have general access to the road network.

The NHVR recognises that for many applications, lifting system distributors can source systems that are capable of being reduced under 2.5m width, but for larger capacity system or systems with advanced features, reducing the width under 2.5m is not possible.

Where the overall width of the modified vehicle cannot be reduced and the on-road performance of the vehicle is not impacted, the vehicle may be eligible for PBS approval.

#### PBS Assessment

Where the width of a VMLS cannot be reduced, the vehicle may be eligible to be assessed as a 'specified PBS vehicle'.

The usual PBS design approval process must be followed. A PBS Assessor must apply for a PBS Design Approval to the NHVR. The application must show the vehicle configuration with the VLMS fitted and in its transport configuration.

Once design approval is obtained, the VLMS may be fitted and subsequently inspected by an AVE holding the appropriate accreditation under VSB6 Section R. The AVE may then issue a blue plate accordingly.

Once the AVE has approved the modification, a PBS Certifier will conduct a final inspection and a Vehicle Approval application submitted to the NHVR.

As a specified PBS vehicle, the operator is not required to obtain any additional permissions to access the road network. Detailed information on the approval process can be found at [PBS Application process and forms](#).

**Note:** PBS vehicles cannot be used to carry a load that exceeds the regulatory dimension limits detailed in the MDL.

Additionally, they do not have access to concessional or higher mass limits.

More information about specified PBS vehicles can be found in the [Information on general access for PBS Level 1 heavy vehicles operating at General Mass Limits](#).

## Certification procedure

The certification procedure for this type of modification is as follows:

1.	Modifier	Determine if the width of VMLS can be reduced so that the modified vehicle is within regulatory dimensions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If <b>yes</b>, the modification will need to be done in accordance with section R of VSB6.</li> <li>• If <b>no</b>, a PBS Approval is required.</li> </ul>
2.	PBS Assessor	Consult with modifier and submit DA.
3.	Modifier	Once PBS DA has been issued: Perform modification in accordance with the approved DA and VSB6.
4.	Modifier	Organise approval inspection by an accredited AVE.
5.	R1 AVE	Perform inspection, complete R1 checklist assessment report and determine if compliance has been achieved. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If <b>yes</b>, proceed to step 6.</li> <li>• If <b>no</b>, do not proceed, advise modifier rework is required to ensure compliance. Return to step 3.</li> </ul>
6.	R1 AVE	Issue modification certificate, affix modification plate, and submit paperwork as required by the relevant AVE registration scheme.
7.	Modifier	Engage PBS Certifier to inspect the modified vehicle
8.	PBS Certifier	Inspect the modified vehicle against the DA and submit PBS Vehicle Approval (VA)
9.	NHVR	Issue PBS Vehicle Approval
10.	Owner	Ensure VA is carried in the vehicle.

**Note:** Many PBS Certifiers are also AVEs, so may be able to carry out certification of the modification as well as the PBS certification inspection.

Provided that the PBS Certifier is not involved in the physical modification of the vehicle, and is only carrying out an assessment and certification of the modification, this is not considered a conflict of interest under the [PBS Assessor Accreditation Rules](#).

## Chain of Responsibility

Under the Chain of Responsibility (CoR) laws, relevant parties in the transport supply chain have a duty to ensure the safety of their transport activities.

Parties in the chain have an obligation to eliminate or minimise potential harm or loss (risk) by doing all that is reasonably practicable in their business to ensure safety.

Implementing a system to ensure vehicles comply with vehicle regulations, including mass, dimension and vehicle standards, can support transport safety.

## Complying with the Heavy Vehicle National Law

The operator of a heavy vehicle must ensure their vehicle complies with the Australian Design Rules (ADRs) and 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. For more information see the Heavy vehicle defects—Compliance and enforcement bulletin at <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/ce-bulletins>

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### VSG30 Revision history

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