

⚠ SAFETY BULLETIN

November 2025

Selecting the appropriate vehicle to transport hay

Subject

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator is issuing this safety bulletin to highlight the critical importance of proper load restraint, visibility and the use of suitable vehicles when transporting loads on public roads. In particular, NHVR Safety and Compliance Officers (SCO's) have highlighted the risks associated with the transportation of hay on roads with machinery or agricultural implements.

This bulletin outlines key preventative measures that drivers and operators should take to reduce the risks of incidents occurring, ensuring the safe movement of goods on our roads.

Issue

Recent interactions have identified unsafe practices in the transport of hay bales, particularly involving:

- The use of unsuitable vehicles for freight transport on public roads, e.g. vehicles that are not primarily designed for road use such as forklifts, tractors, agricultural machinery or implements.
- Poorly loaded or unrestrained hay bales, increasing the risk of dislodgement and instability.
- Obstructed driver visibility of the road directly in front of the vehicle.

These practices significantly increase safety risks, particularly when interacting with other road users on high-speed corridors and highways where visibility, stability and safe loading is critical.

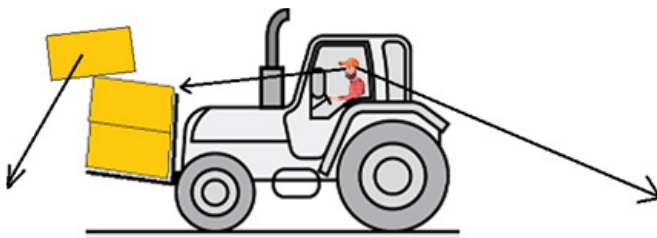


Figure 1. Poorly restrained load



Figure 2. Poorly restrained load

Action Required

Load restraint requirements for all heavy vehicles (including forklifts, tractors, and agricultural machinery or implements).

Loads carried on tractor tynes, spears, grappling devices, buckets or carry-alls (handling equipment) must be restrained to meet the loading requirements set out in the *Heavy Vehicle National Law* (HVNL) when carried on a road or road-related area.

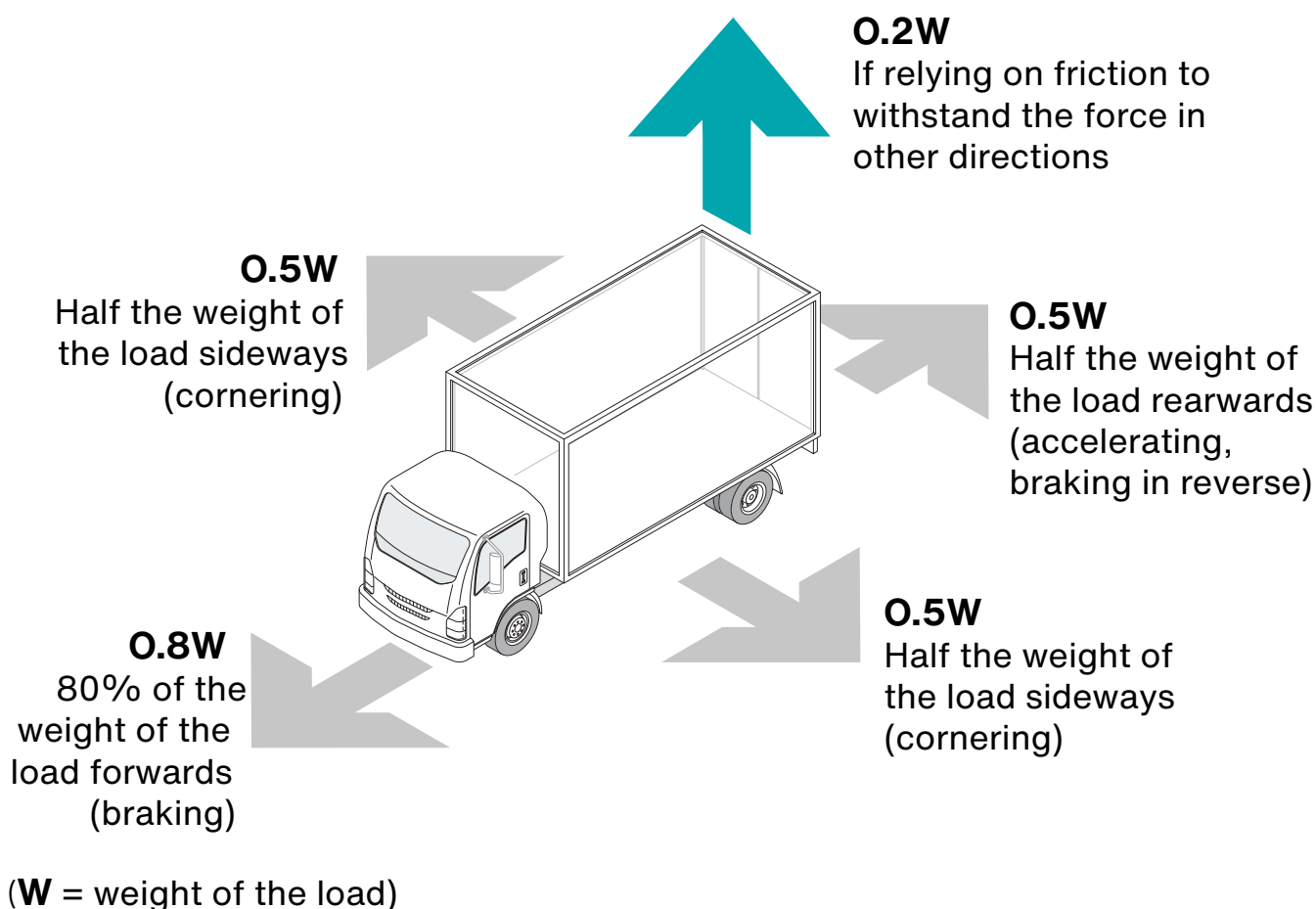
The Loading Performance Standards detailed in the HVNL and the [Load Restraint Guide 2025](#) require that, under normal driving conditions, the load must be secured to withstand the following forces:

- 0.8g deceleration in the forward
- 0.5g acceleration in the rearward/sideways directions
- 0.2g acceleration in the vertical direction.

These forces represent the minimum restraint performance required to prevent loss of the load during transit.

Handling equipment may assist in supporting or positioning the load, although additional restraint measures are often required to ensure compliance with the HVNL.

For all load restraint requirements, the guide provides practical advice on general load restraint methods even where there are no specific examples. For specific applications, consult your industry association or a qualified load restraint expert.



Visibility

Ensure no part of the load obstructs the driver's view of the road in front of the vehicle.

Adjust mirrors (if fitted) before travel to maintain visibility in all directions, especially on high-speed roads.

Vehicle Use

Vehicle Use – Right Vehicle / Right Purpose

Vehicles that are not primarily designed for road use such as tractors, machinery or agricultural implements are generally unsuitable for freight transport on public roads.

Further Information

NHVR Safety Alerts and Bulletins

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