



IB-129B

Vehicle Safety and Standards Information Bulletin

Small Trailers VSB1 Clarifications

Introduction

Concerns have been raised about new trailers that have recently been presented for inspection and licensing.

This Information Bulletin clarifies VSB1.

- The total capacity of the braking system must be equal to the GTM.
- The capacity of braking components varies according to wheel diameter.
- Springs, axle and tyre capacity vary for load sharing or non load sharing suspension.
- Each designated light assembly must to be certified for its specific application (e.g. side marker lamps instead of end out line lamps).
- The position and orientation of lighting is important (e.g. side marker lights attached to horizontal surface instead of vertical surface).

VSB 1 should be referred to.

Note:

The following statement in VSB1 has caused confusion:

“For trailers up 2 tonnes GTM, an efficient braking system is considered to have brakes operating on the wheels of at least one axle. Over-run brakes may only be used on trailers that do not exceed 2 tonnes GTM.”

This does not mean that braking of one axle will always be sufficient regardless of GTM.

Generally a trailer with a GTM of 2 tonnes must have brakes on 2 axles.

Very few brakes manufacturers sell assemblies that have a rating of 2 tonnes on one axle.

The operational limits that are specified by the component manufacturer must be adhered to in the design and construction of a trailer.

As the manufacturer of a small trailer there is a requirement to identify any components that have been fitted to a particular road trailer for the purposes of tracing components in the event of a safety related defect recall notice.

This record keeping requirement applies whether a single trailer or a thousand trailers are manufactured.

You are advised to take these records with you at the time of inspection. The vehicle examiner may request evidence verifying the suitability of the component or how it should be fitted.

Assistance with design and compliance issues may be obtained by utilizing the services of a person listed on IB-102 Engineering & Recognised Signatories.

As a manufacturer you are subject to Commonwealth Laws concerning the manufacture of trailers as explained in the media release AA495/2009 below.

Unsafe Trailers Put on Notice with New Code of Practice

Media Release

AA495/2009

18 November 2009

Importers and local manufacturers of unsafe trailers and caravans could face large fines under new safety standards that come into force today.

The new rules apply to all imported and locally produced trailers up to 4.5 tonnes, including box, motorcycle, boat, plant and equipment trailers as well as horse floats, caravans and other recreational trailers.

These products will now need to comply with a new national code of practice, with the importers and local manufacturers of non-compliant trailers facing fines of up to \$66,000.

The action we've taken will help prevent trailers being sold with couplings that are incompatible with Australian vehicles, unsafe drawbars and safety chains, nonstandard LPG installations, inadequate lamps and reflectors or inadequate brakes and suspensions.

People that unwittingly purchase trailers with such safety defects can face real difficulties registering them with state and territory transport authorities, potentially costing the owners thousands of dollars to make them compliant.

We want Australians to feel confident that the trailers they buy are safe and roadworthy. Over 18,000 trailers are imported annually, with thousands more manufactured locally.

The national code was developed by the Australian Government in close consultation with the states and territories as well as the nation's peak industry body, the Recreational Vehicle Manufacturers Association of Australia Inc. It is supported by new regulations made under the *Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989*.

Changes will also be made to the **Personal Import Scheme** to limit the importation of eligible vehicles to one every five years instead of one every 12 months.

This move will still allow Australians returning home from long periods overseas to bring with them their personal vehicles, whilst reducing the potential for abuse by organised syndicates seeking to bypass our rigorous motor vehicle certification arrangements by using third parties to import non-compliant vehicles.

Transitional arrangements will apply for a year so vehicles already purchased will not be affected. More detailed information can be found at: the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development's web site at <http://www.Infrastructure.gov.au>

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