



## IB-12B

### Vehicle Safety and Standards Information Bulletin

## Motorcycle Trailers - Construction and Use

### Motorcycle requirements

Motorcycles which are equipped to tow trailers and trailers which are towed by motorcycles shall comply with the special conditions of this Section.

Motorcycles after 01/03/92 to comply with Australian Design Rules (ADR) 44 Clauses 44.2 (pre 01/03/92)

Motorcycles after 01/03/92 to comply with ADR 62/00 Clauses 6.0

Motorcycles after 01/03/98 to comply with ADR 62/01 Clauses 12.3.1

Motorcycles after 01/01/09 to comply with ADR 62/02

Note: It is advisable before towing a trailer, to notify your insurance company.

### Licensing requirements

So far as the Department of Transport (DoT) is concerned motorcycle trailers are to be treated as any other trailer and meet Vehicle Standards Bulletin 1 (VSB1) requirements i.e. body codes, insurance codes, methods of determining Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) etc. remain unchanged.

### VIN numbers

As is the case for all other vehicles, motorcycle trailers manufactured on or after January 1, 1989 must display a compliance plate with VIN number.

### Road use (information only)

Motorcycle trailers are limited in their use according to the unladen mass of the towing motor cycle as defined in the Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014, r168. **A motor cycle must not tow more than its unladen mass irrespective of whether the trailer is fitted with brakes or not.**

When an unbraked sidecar is attached, the mass of the sidecar and its load is to be added to the mass of the trailer and its load. Where a braked sidecar is attached the sidecar mass and its load is included in the mass of the motorcycle.

## Lighting requirements for trailers other than single wheeled

The lighting is to conform to the National Code of Practice: VSB1 Revision 5 (June 2009).

### Single wheeled trailers

It will be acceptable for the rear lighting fitted to these specific single wheel trailers to comply with the requirements for motorcycle ADR lighting requirements.

This requirement specially relates to separation of the rear indicator lights. The ADR's require the inner edges of the 2 rear indicator lenses to be at least 240mm apart and no part of the vehicle, including the registration plate, to block out any lamp light. Additionally, the lamps must be fitted symmetrically.

A separate trailer licence plate must also be fitted to the trailer. The licence plate may also be fitted in accordance with motorcycle ADR requirements, which stipulates that the centre of the plate must not be less than 300mm from the ground.

**Please note:** Modified or damaged number plates are not permitted.

### Electrical connections: ADR 42.00

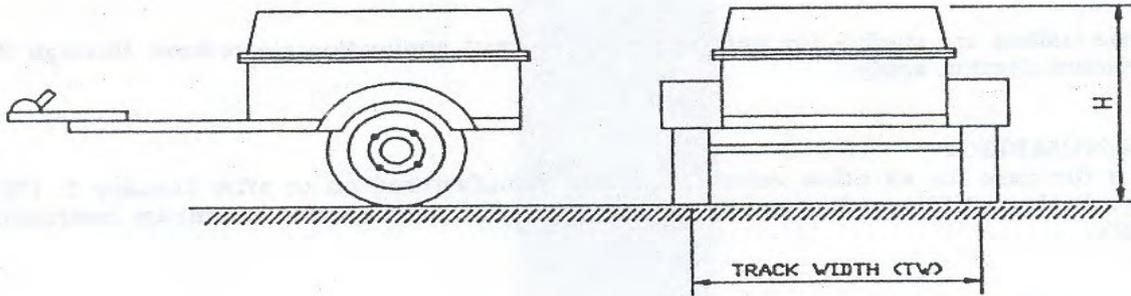
Trailers must be fitted with electrical connectors which comply with Australian Standard 2513-1982 Electrical Connectors for Trailer Vehicles. These include 7 and 12 pin connectors. (Currently applicable to commercially produced trailers only).

### Construction requirements: ADR 44.00

General construction requirements for motorcycle trailers are identical to all other trailers so far as overall dimensions, lighting, suspensions and tyres are concerned (refer VSB1).

Trailers designed specifically for motorcycles may vary from other trailers in the following areas:

- Motorcycle trailers may be constructed with **one wheel**
- Or, if fitted with **two wheels**, the height of a motorcycle trailer is limited by the track width according to the following formula:
  - When loaded, the height of the defined cargo space (H) or load must not be more than the track width (TW) as shown in the figure below.
    - **Note 1:** For open box trailers the height of the defined load space shall be taken as the top of the trailer body, unless some other form of secure attachment is used to hold the load.
    - **Note 2:** Any trailer which does not conform to the above formula must be directed to the DoT.



H must be less than TW

- In both the laden and unladen condition the downward load transmitted through the coupling, with the trailer in a horizontal position, must lie in the range between 2% and 5% of the GVM.
- Trailer Couplings – Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014, r365 does apply to these trailers. The tow bar, coupling and safety connections (chain or wire rope) must be in conformity with ADR 62 (L-Group Vehicles). A summary of these requirements follows:
  - Couplings fitted to one wheel trailers designed to lean with the towing vehicle shall allow angular movement about the combination's lateral and vertical axes only.
  - Towbars and drawbars must be equipped with attachments for at least one safety connection (can be chain or wire rope) which when correctly attached prevents the trailer drawbar from striking the ground should there be an accidental detachment of the trailer.
 

Such attachment/s must be separate from the coupling and its fasteners.
  - Towbars and couplings shall clearly and permanently display the manufacturers name and trade mark and the capacity expressed in kg's in characters not less than 5mm high.
- Components marked for use on a specific motor cycle must not be used on any other motorcycle unless approved by the DoT.
- Safety chains should comply with VSB1 Safety Chains requirements for Small Trailers AS4177.4.

Trailers may be attached to the framework joining a sidecar providing the framework is of adequate strength.

**NOTE 1: Trailers manufactured prior to December 29, 1989**

The Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014 does not distinguish between new and old trailers so far as the design of the motorcycle tow bar; coupling and safety connections are concerned.

These trailers must therefore comply with all the requirements specified above.

**NOTE 2: All individually constructed trailers**

Individually constructed trailers must also comply with the requirements specified above. Purpose built couplings and tow bars must be referred to the DoT if these components are unmarked and there is doubt as to their strength. ADR62 Mechanical connections between vehicles requirements must be satisfied.

**NOTE 3: Current commercial motorcycle trailer production**

Examiners should be aware that the Commonwealth *Motor Vehicle Standards Act* requires commercially produced motorcycle trailers to comply with the Third Edition Design Rules including ADR 43/01: Vehicle Configuration and Marking.

This means that each commercially produced vehicle, in addition to the requirements specified above, will need to display a compliance plate must bear the following markings:

- A VIN number
- A Trailer Plate bearing the following information:
  - Manufacturer's name
  - Date of Manufacture
  - Gross Trailer Mass (GVM)
  - Tyre and Rim Data
  - Rim profile
  - Recommended tyre size
  - Recommended tyre pressure in kPa
  - Maximum tyre load in kg or load index
  - Any additional relative information the manufacturer wishes to include e.g. tare, load capacity, VIN etc.

**Related documents and links**

- Australian Design Rules are available on the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development website ([www.infrastructure.gov.au](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au))
- VSB 1 is available on the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development website ([www.infrastructure.gov.au](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au))
- [Road Traffic \(Vehicles\) Regulations 2014](#) can be accessed on State Law Publisher website ([www.slp.wa.gov.au](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au))
- Standards Australia can be accessed online ([www.standards.org.au](http://www.standards.org.au))
- The Motor Vehicle Standards Act (Cwlth) is available on Australasian Legal Information Institute website ([www.austlii.edu.au](http://www.austlii.edu.au)).

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