

Semitrailer rear bumpers

Purpose

This guide provides advice to the heavy vehicle industry about changes to the requirements for rear bumper bars on semitrailers.

Introduction

Recently, the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development announced changes to the Australian Design Rule (ADR) requirements for semitrailer rear bumpers, removing the need for these bumpers to be painted white.

The change will not affect the safety of heavy vehicles and delivers productivity benefits to industry. This change only applies to new semitrailers built from 1 January 2005.

To ensure the full benefits of this change are realised, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) has issued a vehicle standards exemption notice, removing the requirement for the rear bumper to be painted white for semitrailers built from July 1988, when the requirement was first introduced. This notice is available from the NHVR website at www.nhvr.gov.au/national-notice



Application to in-service semitrailers

From 19 February 2016, there will no longer be a requirement for the rear bumper of any in-service semitrailer to be white. When replacing a damaged rear bumper, or refurbishing a semitrailer, any colour of rear bumper can be fitted without making the vehicle non-compliant with the heavy vehicle safety standards.

While the rear bumper on a semitrailer no longer needs to be white, there are some other important safety requirements that need to be met:

- rear marking plates must still be fitted, to improve the conspicuity (visibility) of the rear of the trailer
- compulsory lights such as brake, tail, direction indicating, rear position or end-outline marker lamps must still be fitted and comply with the requirements of the ADRs and heavy vehicle safety standards
- operators should give consideration to the improved visibility that a white rear bumper can provide to the trailer.

Application in Western Australia and Northern Territory

The NHVR is currently consulting with regulators in both Western Australia and the Northern Territory about the issue of similar exemptions in those jurisdictions. The NHVR will update this guide once further information is available about exemptions in these jurisdictions.

Complying with the national heavy vehicle safety standards

The operator of a heavy vehicle must ensure that their vehicle complies with the ADRs and *Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation*. Using or permitting another person 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, formal warnings or being issued with a defect notice. For more information see the *Heavy vehicle defects—Compliance and enforcement bulletin* at www.nhvr.gov.au/ce-bulletins

About the NHVR

The NHVR is Australia's dedicated independent regulator for heavy vehicles over 4.5 tonnes Gross Vehicle Mass.

The NHVR was created to administer one set of rules for heavy vehicles under the Heavy Vehicle National Law, improve safety and productivity, minimise the compliance burden on the heavy vehicle transport industry and reduce duplication and inconsistencies across state and territory borders.

The NHVR has a dedicated Vehicle Safety Standards team to help with modification applications and advise on any technical aspects.

For more information:

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*Standard 1300 call charges apply. Please check with your phone provider

Please note: While every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the content of this Vehicle Standards Guide, it should not be relied upon as legal advice.



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