

## Re-rating of Gross Vehicle Mass

### Purpose

This guide provides advice to vehicle owners and modifiers about the heavy vehicle safety standard requirements for modifying a vehicle's gross vehicle mass (GVM).

### Introduction

Prior to commencement of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR), the requirements for re-rating a vehicle's GVM were managed by each jurisdiction, resulting in different requirements being applied. To address this issue, the NHVR has reviewed current practices and the requirements of the [Heavy Vehicle National Law](#) (HVNL) to determine a consistent set of requirements for GVM re-ratings.

Further information about heavy vehicle modifications can be found at [www.nhvr.gov.au/hvmodifications](http://www.nhvr.gov.au/hvmodifications)

### Requirements for re-rating GVM

Generally, there are two categories of GVM re-ratings:

#### 1. Vehicle with optional GVMs

Where a vehicle is from a model range released with a number of GVM options, the vehicle's GVM can be re-rated using the S1 code of [Vehicle Standards Bulletin \(VSB\) 6](#). In this situation the vehicle must be configured to match the manufacturer's specification for the revised GVM. An S1 modification plate affixed and certificate issued to the registered operator or owner by an Approved Vehicle Examiner (AVE).

Re-rating of the vehicle is not acceptable unless the vehicle's manufacturer has provided the specifications in writing and the modification is certified by an AVE. The AVE must keep a copy of the manufacturer's certification for future reference.

Written advice from a motor dealer is not acceptable.

#### 2. Vehicle without optional GVMs

Where a vehicle is fitted with an identification plate providing a single GVM and the vehicle model does not have an alternate GVM option, re-rating of the vehicle can only occur in very limited circumstances for:

- a) A Specific Purpose Vehicle (e.g. motorhome) where the maximum necessary and likely laden vehicle mass can be established to be lower than the vehicle manufacturer's original GVM.
- b) A vehicle that has undergone an engineering assessment to increase or reduce its GVM, provided that all relevant components have been assessed and modified to be suitable for the revised GVM.
- c) A vehicle that would normally fit under category 1 *Vehicle with optional GVMs*, but because the manufacturer is no longer in business, it is not possible to verify the manufacturer's specifications or vehicle's suitability for a GVM re-rating.

In circumstances a) and b), the vehicle must be assessed, modified and certified under the S2 code of VSB6, a modification plate affixed and modification certificate issued to the registered operator or owner by an AVE. Where the changes made to alter the vehicles GVM also impact the vehicle's towing capabilities, the GCM must also be approved and certified under the S3 code of VSB6, a modification plate affixed and modification certificate issued to the registered operator or owner by an AVE.

In circumstance c), the vehicle must be assessed and a S2 certificate (including completing the S2 section checklist) issued outlining the recommended revised GVM of the vehicle and the modifications required to configure the vehicle for the revised GVM. The S2 certificate and checklist must then be presented to an appropriately accredited AVE to verify the vehicle has been modified in the way required by the S2 certificate and certify the vehicle to the S1 code of VSB6, affix a modification plate and issue a modification certificate to the registered operator or owner.

Re-rating of a vehicle's GVM under this category without any physical change to the vehicle or by a modification that would reduce the safety of the vehicle is not permitted. Replacement of the standard tyres with lower rated tyres to achieve a reduced GVM is not permitted as this is considered to reduce the safety of the vehicle.

**When the GVM of a vehicle is re-rated, the AVE must ensure that the vehicle complies with all requirements of the Australian Design Rules (ADRs) and the HVNL applies to the vehicle at its revised GVM.**

### GVM re-ratings to reduce statutory charges

For a heavy vehicle, the primary statutory charge paid in order to use roads is vehicle registration, which is calculated according to how the vehicle is used (prime mover, rigid truck etc) and the number of axles. Generally, this means to reduce the amount of registration payable for a type of vehicle either an axle/s must be removed or the GVM of the vehicle needs to be modified to 4.5 tonnes or less.

Section S of VSB6 does not permit the re-rating of a vehicle's GVM for the purpose of reducing the statutory fees payable, which includes vehicle registration fees. If however, there is a genuine reason to reduce the GVM of a vehicle, and as a result statutory charges payable for the vehicle are also reduced, this is acceptable.

### Re-rating the GVM of a heavy vehicle to 4.5 tonnes or less

Provided that a vehicle's GVM is reduced in accordance with one of the categories outlined in the *Requirements for re-rating GVM* section of this guide, there is nothing that would prevent the GVM being reduced to 4.5 tonnes or less.

The certification of this modification falls under the HVNL and must be certified by an AVE under the S2 section of VSB6, a modification plate affixed and a modification certificate issued to the registered operator or owner.

### Re-rating the GVM of a light vehicle to more than 4.5 tonnes

Certification requirements for re-rating a light vehicle's GVM are set by state and territory transport authorities. To find out about the specific requirements, contact your local transport authority.

### Re-rating a heavy vehicle's gross combination mass (GCM)

This guide only provides advice about the re-rating a vehicles GVM. For further information about re-rating the GCM of a heavy vehicle, please contact an AVE accredited to certify modifications to either the S1 (manufacturer's optional GCM) or S3 (any other GCM re-rating) modifications codes of VSB6.

## Registration and licensing

### Vehicle registration

If a vehicle is modified in a way that impacts its registration, the state or territory transport authority may need to be notified. Common items that may require notification are changes to GVM, GCM, axle configuration and vehicle type (body truck, prime mover etc).

For more information about vehicle registration, contact your state or territory transport authority.

### Driver licensing

The class of licence needed to drive a vehicle may depend on the GVM of the vehicle and the number of axles. When modifying a vehicle's GVM, make sure you are aware what class of licence will be needed to drive it.

For more information about driver licensing, contact your state or territory transport authority.

## Complying with the Heavy Vehicle National Law

It is an offence to modify a heavy vehicle in a way that does not meet the heavy vehicle safety standards in the [NHVR Code of Practice for the Approval of Heavy Vehicles](#) or a modification approval issued by the NHVR. It is also an offence to use a modified heavy vehicle on a road if the modification has not been approved.

Penalties can include an on-the-spot fine and/or being issued with a defect notice.

It is an offence to operate a heavy vehicle on a road that exceeds its GVM or prescribed mass limits. Penalties can include grounding of the vehicle as well as an on-the-spot fine or prosecution in court.

### About the NHVR

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (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:

Email: [vehiclestandards@nhvr.gov.au](mailto:vehiclestandards@nhvr.gov.au)

Visit: [www.nhvr.gov.au/hvmodifications](http://www.nhvr.gov.au/hvmodifications)

Subscribe: [www.nhvr.gov.au/subscribe](http://www.nhvr.gov.au/subscribe)

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Phone: 1300 MYNHVR\* (1300 696 487)

\*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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