

Vehicle Standards Guide 2 (VSG-2)

Changes to the Heavy Vehicle Safety Standards

Revised February 2021

This guide provides advice to the heavy vehicle industry about changes that will be made to the heavy vehicle safety standards from 22 February 2021.

Introduction

To ensure that the *Heavy Vehicle National Law* (the Law), and the *Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation* (the Regulation) are kept current, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) regularly undertakes reviews and makes changes when needed.

Following a recent review, changes will be made to vehicle safety standards requirements in the Law and the Regulation and will commence 22 February 2021.

Summary of changes

Changes will be made to the technical requirements of the vehicle safety standards, set out in the Regulation, including:

- indirect vision devices
- blind spot information systems
- tyres with cleats and other gripping devices
- classes of retroreflective materials

Indirect vision devices

From 22 February 2021, *indirect vision devices* (IVD) fitted to a heavy vehicle are excluded from vehicle width and length measurements. The IVD must either:

- comply ADR 14; or
- be fitted at least 2m above the ground and not increase the overall width of the heavy vehicle, beyond 2.55m

Blind spot information systems

From 22 February 2021, *blind spot information systems* (BSIS) fitted to a heavy vehicle are excluded from vehicle width and length measurements. The BSIS must:

- comply with UNECE R151 or an alternate equivalent standard approved by the NHVR; and
- not increase the overall width of the heavy vehicle beyond 2.6m

Tyres with cleats and other gripping devices

The regulation currently prohibits a tyre fitted to a heavy **motor** vehicle from having cleats or other gripping devices that could damage road surfaces. This provision should apply to all heavy vehicles, including trailers. As such, the regulation has been amended to apply this prohibition to all heavy vehicles.

It is important to note that these changes do not impact the use of mud or snow tyres. Mud and snow tyres are typically marked with the letter “M” and the letter “S” or the alpine symbol (3 Peak Mountains and a Snowflake). Similarly, where required, vehicles and trailers may continue to be fitted with snow chains in accordance with local requirements.

Classes of retroreflective materials

Updates that reference the new classes of retroreflective material have been made. The existing classes have been retained to ensure that operators can continue to use current signs regardless of when they were produced.

Class 1 reflective material have been renamed Class 400 to align with international provisions. Similarly, Class 2 reflective material was renamed Class 100.

NOTE: There are no changes to existing signs or signage requirements.

National Heavy Vehicle Inspection Manual

The National Heavy Vehicle Inspection Manual (NHVIM) is currently under review. To minimise the disruption to the review process, relevant changes resulting from the above legislative amendments will be included in the review.

For more information about the review of the manual visit www.nhvr.gov.au/nhvim

Chain of Responsibility

Under the Chain of Responsibility (CoR) laws, relevant parties in the transport supply chain have a duty to ensure the safety of their transport activities.

Parties in the chain have an obligation to eliminate or minimise potential harm or loss (risk) by doing all that is reasonably practicable in their business to ensure safety.

Implementing a system to ensure you are informed of changes to the vehicle safety standards and apply these to your business can support transport safety.

Complying with the national heavy vehicle safety standards

The operator of a heavy vehicle must ensure their vehicle complies with the *Australian Design Rules (ADRs)* and *Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation*. Using or permitting another person to 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
- has a part that does not perform its intended function; has deteriorated to an extent that it cannot be reasonably relied on to perform its intended function.

Penalties can include on-the-spot fines or prosecution. Formal warnings or a defect notice may also be issued. For more information see the *Heavy vehicle defects—Compliance and enforcement bulletin* at www.nhvr.gov.au/ce-bulletins

For more information:

Subscribe: www.nhvr.gov.au/subscribe
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