

# Vehicle Inspectors Bulletin No. 12

Effective Date: 6 November 2007

Transport Services Division

Issued by  
Road Transport Compliance

For: ♦ Transport Inspectors      ♦ MVR Supervisors

## 6.5 Tonne Steer Axle Mass

### Background

In October 2006, Transport Ministers agreed to allow heavy vehicles, with a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) of 15 tonnes and over, to operate with a steer axle mass up to 6.5 tonnes subject to the following:

1. The heavy vehicle is fitted with an engine that complies with the engine emission standards of Australian Design Rule (ADR) 80/01 (Euro 4);
2. The heavy vehicle is fitted with a Front Underrun Protection Device (FUPD) that complies with UN ECE Regulation 93;
3. The heavy vehicle has a cabin that complies with the strength requirements of UN ECE Regulation 29;
4. The components of the heavy vehicle are suitably rated to allow 6.5 tonnes on the steer axle;
5. The vehicle's plated GVM is 15 tonnes or over.

The steer axle mass increase from 6.0 to 6.5 tonnes has been offered as a concession to operators to encourage the early take up of these safety and environmental measures.

### Policy

To meet the agreed national reform, the NT has published a gazette notice that raises the legal steer axle mass limit to 6.5 tonnes for vehicles that comply with the above criteria.

Vehicles that meet the above criteria will still need to apply for a Permit of Exemption for steer axle masses that exceed 6.5 tonnes.

All other vehicles remain subject to a maximum 6.0 tonne steer axle limit unless operating under a current Permit of Exemption.

#### Darwin

Vehicle Standards Centre  
Goyder Road, Parap  
Phone: (08) 8999 3127  
(08) 8999 3133  
Fax: (08) 8999 3187

#### Katherine

Katherine Weigh Bridge  
Stuart Highway  
Phone: (08) 8973 8791  
Fax: (08) 8973 8762

#### Alice Springs

Vehicle Standards Centre  
North Stuart Highway  
Phone: (08) 8951 5297  
Fax: (08) 8951 5313

## Enforcement

When carrying out enforcement action, Approved Officers need to determine whether a vehicle meets the requirements to obtain the 6.5 tonne steer axle mass concession.

This is achieved through visual inspection of the vehicle Compliance Plate, Modification Plates or Approval Plates (examples below), or inspection of relevant documentation presented with the vehicle:

**a) Engine Emission – to comply with ADR 80/01.**

All NC category vehicles with a GVM of 15 tonnes and over fitted with an Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) diesel engine and with a compliance date on or after January 2008 comply with ADR 80/01; or

Any other vehicle with a GVM of 15 tonnes and over that can supply evidence of engine compliance with ADR 80/01.

**b) Front Underrun Protection Device (FUPD)**

UN ECE R93 compliant FUPDs are identified with an “E” mark and fitted with a permanent approval plate fixed to the FUPD, or fixed on the vehicle. The plate must state that it conforms with the Front Underrun Protection requirements of the UN/ECE Regulation No. 93.

Any non-standard frontal protrusions e.g. Bull bars and Nudge bars, are to be certified as either conforming, or non-compromising, to the requirements of the UN/ECE Regulation No. 93. Aerials and additional lighting are acceptable as non-compromising items.

**c) Cabin Strength**

A vehicle must be fitted with a cabin that complies with UN ECE R29. Compliant cabins are identified with an approval plate fitted to the vehicle (usually located near to, and of a similar size to the Vehicle Compliance Plate) and must reference that it conforms with the Cab Strength requirements of the UN/ECE Regulation No. 29.

**d) Vehicle GVM / Steer Axle Rating**

The vehicle’s GVM is 15 tonnes and over and have appropriately rated wheels, tyres, axle and suspension to accommodate 6.5 tonnes over its steer axle.

### Examples of Approval Plates

MANUFACTURER'S NAME	
FRONT UNDERRUN PROTECTION (FUP)	
MAKE	VOLVO
MODEL	6026
COMPETENT ENTITY No.	XXXXX
APPROVAL No.	XXXXX
UNECE R93 FUP COMPATIBLE	XXXXX
UNECE R93 FUPD	YES

MANUFACTURER'S NAME	
COMPETENT ENTITY No.	XXXXX
THIS VEHICLE WAS MANUFACTURED TO COMPLY CONFIRM WITH THE CABIN STRENGTH REQUIREMENTS OF UNECE REGULATION No. 29	