



Northern Territory of Australia

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Northern Territory of Australia

*Motor Vehicles Act 1949*

## **Indivisible Load Carrying Vehicle Mass Exemption**

I, Cindy-Lee McDonald, Registrar of Motor Vehicles, under section 135 (1) of the *Motor Vehicles Act 1949*, exempt the class of motor vehicles identified in Division 1 of the Schedule from the requirements of regulation 7 of the *Motor Vehicles (Standards) Regulations 2003*, subject to the conditions set out in Divisions 2 to 6 of the Schedule.

C-L. MCDONALD  
Registrar of Motor Vehicles

Dated 1 April 2025

*Note: This exemption was granted by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles after having regard to the matters in section 135(2) of the Motor Vehicles Act 1949.*

### **Schedule 1**

#### **Division 1                      Exempt Class**

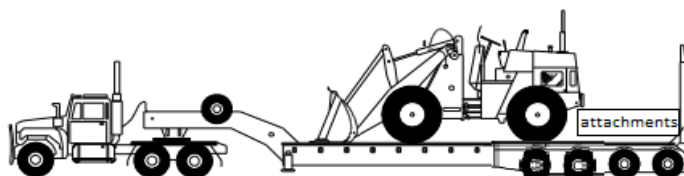
1. A motor vehicle that:
  - (a) is one of the following types of vehicle or vehicle combinations:
    - (i) a rigid truck not coupled to any trailer;
    - (ii) a prime mover hauling a single semi-trailer;
    - (iii) a prime mover hauling a low loader (with or without compensating dolly);
    - (iv) a prime mover hauling a platform trailer; and

- (b) all axles or axle groups on the vehicle, apart from the steer axle, are fitted with at least four tyres, and have a ground contact width of at least 2.4m; and
- (c) is loaded such that one or more axles or axle groups on the vehicle, exceed the maximum mass limits provided for under regulation 7(b) of the *Motor Vehicles (Standards) Regulations 2003*.

## **Division 2            Load**

- 2. The load on the vehicle must only be one indivisible item and must be made as light as practicable.
- 3. Despite clause 2, a load consisting of an indivisible item of plant and machinery may also carry equipment, tools, substances or detached parts essential for the use of that plant or machinery.

*Example for clause 3*



*A bucket may be carried in conjunction with an excavator; a blade may be carried in conjunction with a dozer; or drill rods may be carried with a drill rig.*

## **Division 3            Mass Limits for the vehicle**

- 4. The mass carried on a steer axle or twin steer axle group on the vehicle must not exceed the mass limits specified in regulation 7 of the *Motor Vehicles (Standards) Regulations 2003*, or the limit determined under another instrument, permit or exemption.
- 5. The mass carried on the drive axle group on a rigid truck or prime mover must not exceed the mass specified for that axle group type in **Table 1** and must meet the minimum distance between the centre line of each axle group in **Table 1**.

Table 1 – Maximum drive axle mass limits for Rigid Trucks and Prime Movers

Drive Axle Group Type	Single	Tandem	Tri-axle
Minimum distance between the centre-line of each axle within the axle group	N/A	1.2m	1.2m
Maximum Mass (Tonnes)	9.0	18.5	25.0

6. A tandem drive prime mover hauling a loaded trailer must have a minimum drive axle mass of at least 14.0 tonnes when loaded.
7. A tri-drive prime mover hauling a loaded trailer must have a minimum drive axle mass of at least 18.0 tonnes when loaded.

#### **Division 4                      Mass Limits for a trailer hauled by the vehicle**

8. The mass carried on an axle or axle group on a semi-trailer, compensating or low loader dolly or low loader must not exceed the mass specified for that axle type in **Table 2**, and must meet the minimum distance between the centre line of each axle group in **Table 2**.

Table 2 – Maximum mass limits for semi-trailers, compensating dolly and low loaders

	Number of Axles & Axles Spacing in Axle Group (measured from centre lines)						
	1 Axle	2 Axles	3 Axles	3 Axles	4 Axles	4 Axles	5 Axles
	N/A	At least 1.2m apart	At least 1.2m apart	At least 1.8m apart	At least 1.2m apart	If front 2 and rear 2 axles are at least 1.2m apart, and middle 2 axles are at least 2.4m apart	At least 1.2m apart
Axle Group Mass Limits for 4 Tyred Axles (tonnes)							
Overall Ground Contact Width at least 2.4m apart	9.0	18.5	25.0	27.0	30.0	35.0	
Axle Group Mass for 8 Tyred Axles (tonnes)							
Overall Ground Contact Width at least 2.4m apart	10.5	21.0	25.0	27.0	30.0	35.0	35.0

(a) To be eligible for the mass limits specified in Table 2, vehicle combinations must have the minimum distances between axle groups as per **Figure 1**.

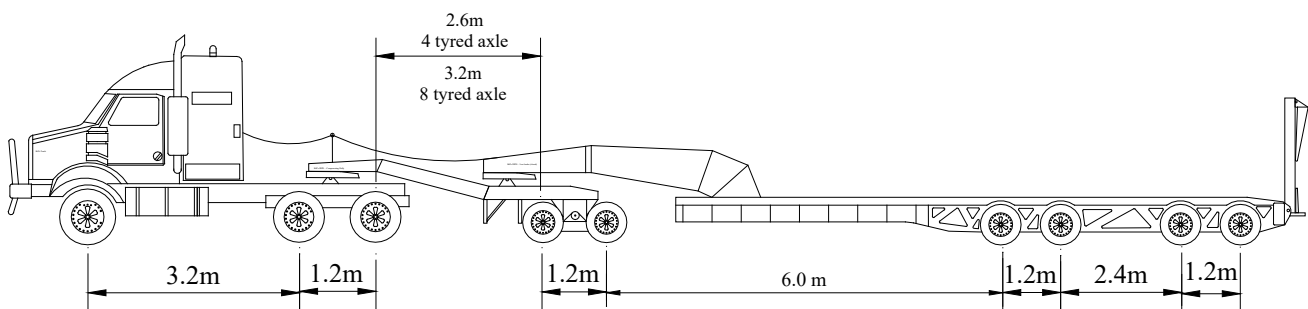


Figure 1

9. The axle group mass on a platform trailer must not exceed the mass specified for that axle type in **Table 3**.

Table 3 – Maximum mass limits for Platform trailers

Number of Axles	5 or 6	$\geq 7$
Maximum Mass (Tonnes)	35.0	40.0

### Division 5 Routes of Travel

10. The vehicle must only travel on the following routes:
- the Road Train and Oversize Load Routes defined in Appendix B of the Northern Territory Permit Guidelines for Oversize and Over-mass Vehicles;
  - the Stuart Highway;
  - the Arnhem Highway;
  - the Buntine Highway;
  - the Buchannan Highway;
  - the Tanami Road;
  - the Victoria Highway;
  - the Barkly Highway;
  - the Tablelands Highway;
  - the Carpentaria Highway.

*Note 1: A trip specific permit of exemption must be obtained to travel overmass on any other route.*

*Note 2: All routes are subject to restrictions as published by the Department.*

### Division 6 Road and Infrastructure Conditions

#### Road Conditions

- The vehicle must, when travelling on any of the routes specified in Division 5, comply and be operated in accordance with any restrictions imposed upon the use of a road via the NT Road Report or on-site signage, including any restrictions relating to the mass of vehicles on the road.
- The NT Road Report must be consulted online at <http://www.ntlis.nt.gov.au/roadreport/> or via phone on 1800 246 199 prior to travelling on the routes specified in Division 5.
- The vehicle must not travel on any roads or structures that have been damaged (for example by floods, submergence or subsidence).

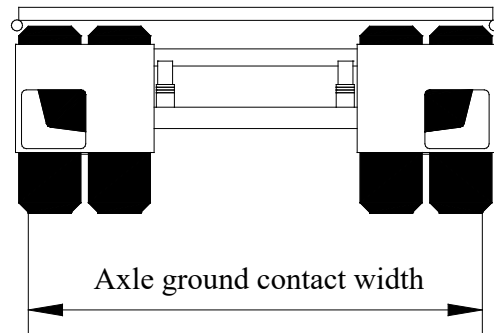
## Bridges

14. A loaded vehicle operating under this exemption must not cross a timber or composite truss bridge unless:
- (a) there is no other load on the bridge; and
  - (b) crossing occurs along the centre line of the bridge (or as otherwise directed by a competent authority); and
  - (c) the vehicle does not exceed a speed greater than 7km/h whilst crossing the bridge.

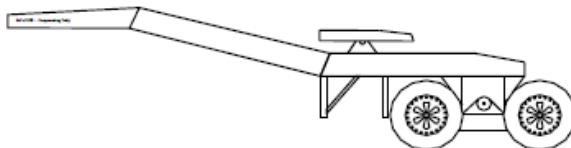
## Division 7 Definitions

15. In this Schedule –

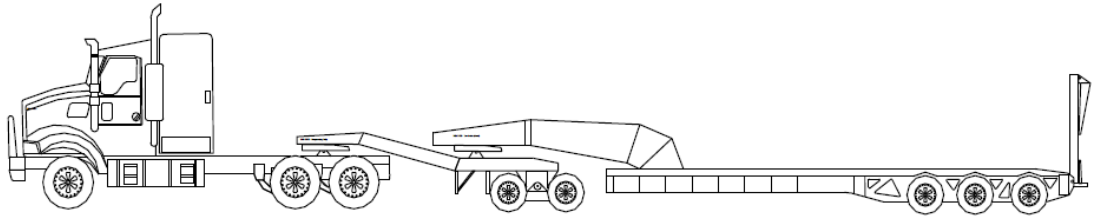
***axle ground contact width*** means the distance between the outside of the two outer tyres of the same axle where they contact the ground.



***low loader dolly*** means a dolly (also known as a compensating dolly) designed to distribute mass, which is coupled to a prime mover's fifth wheel and a low loader's king pin.



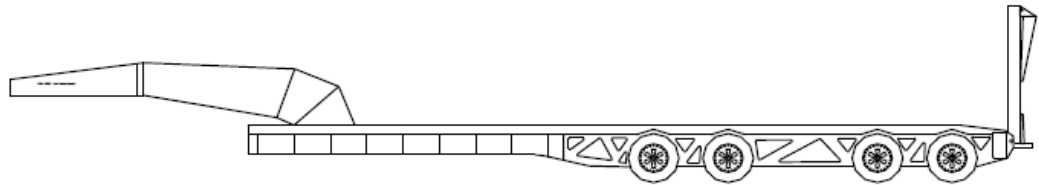
*low loader or compensating dolly*



*prime mover hauling a low loader with a compensating dolly*

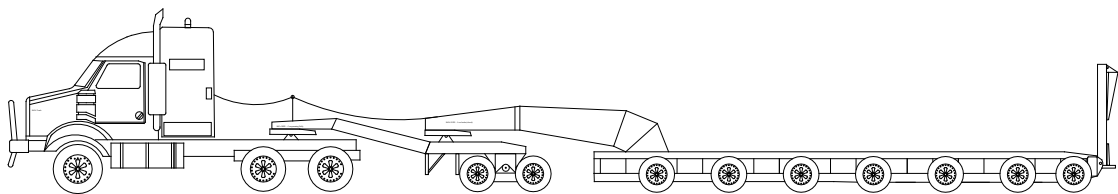
**indivisible item** means an item which cannot, without disproportionate effort, expense or risk of damage, be divided into two or more loads for the purpose of transport on public roads.

**low loader** means a semi-trailer with a loading deck no more than 1m above the ground.



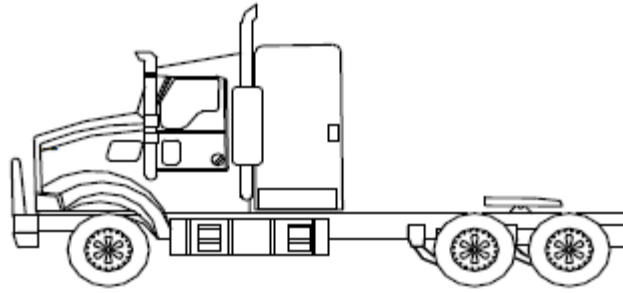
*low loader*

**platform trailer** means a trailer with at least 5 axles at even spacings along the length of the trailer. Platform trailers may be connected to the prime mover via a gooseneck or drawbar type coupling. A platform trailer may also be of a modular construction.



*platform trailer with gooseneck type coupling, being hauled by prime mover and compensating dolly combination*

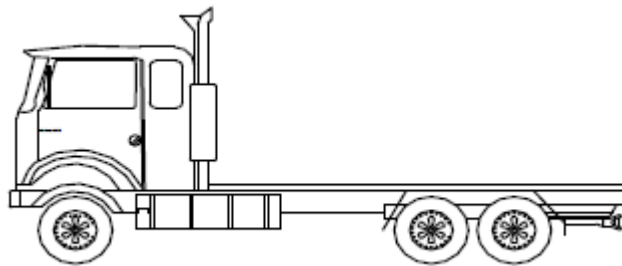
**prime mover** means a truck designed to have a semi-trailer attached via a fifth wheel coupling (or drawbar type coupling in the case of a platform trailer), and which does not have any other means to carry a load.



*prime mover*

**quad axle group** means a group of at least 4 axles in which the distance between the centre lines of the outermost axles is over 3.2 metres, but not over 4.9 metres.

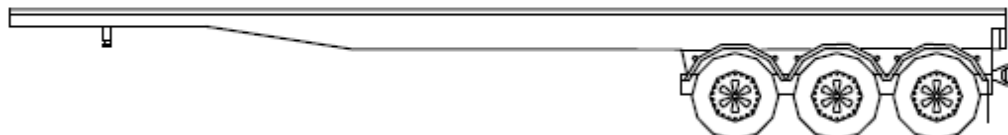
**rigid truck** means a truck which has a body constructed to take a load.



*rigid truck*

**semi-trailer** means a trailer (including a pole-type trailer) that has:

- (a) 1 axle group or single axle to the rear; and
- (b) a means of attachment to a prime mover that results in some of the load being imposed on the prime mover.



*semi-trailer*



***tandem axle group*** means a group of at least 2 axles in which the distance between the centre lines of the axles is at least 1 metre, but not over 2 metres.

***tri-axle group*** means a group of at least 3 axles in which the distance between the centre lines of the outermost axles is at least 2 metres, but not over 3.2 metres.

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