



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**

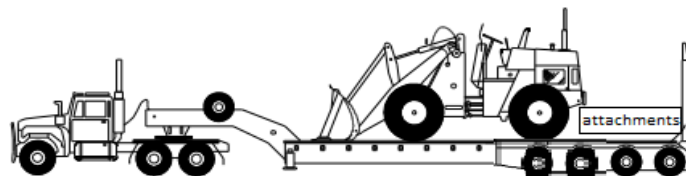
1. A motor vehicle that:
  - (a) is one of the following types of vehicle or vehicle combinations:
    - (i) a rigid truck not coupled to any trailer;
    - (ii) a prime mover hauling a single semi-trailer;
    - (iii) a prime mover hauling a low loader (with or without compensating dolly);
    - (iv)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

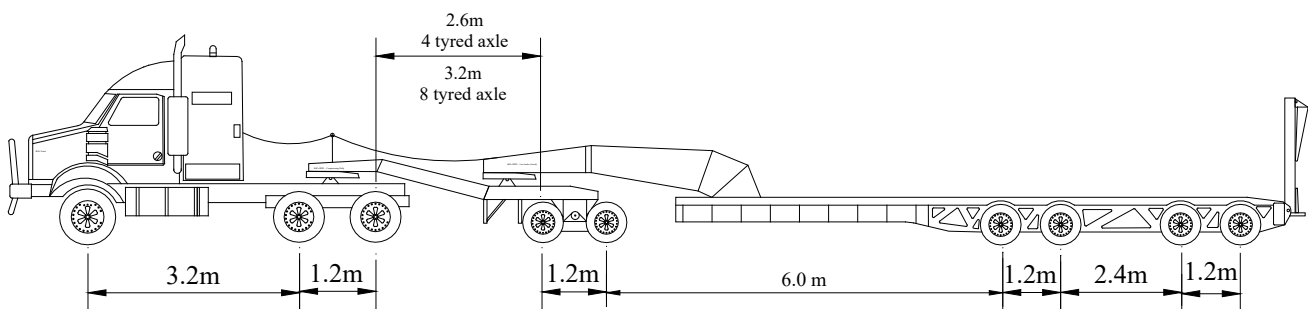


Figure 1

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).

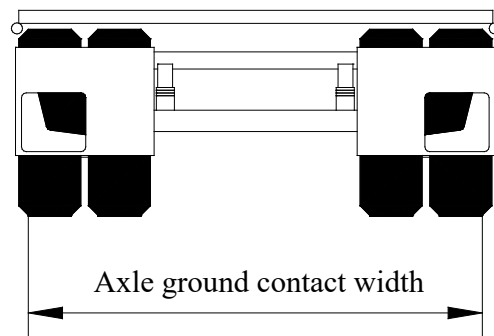
## Bridges

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.

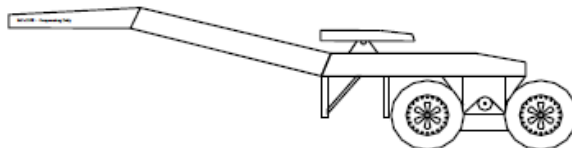
## Division 7 Definitions

15. In this Schedule –

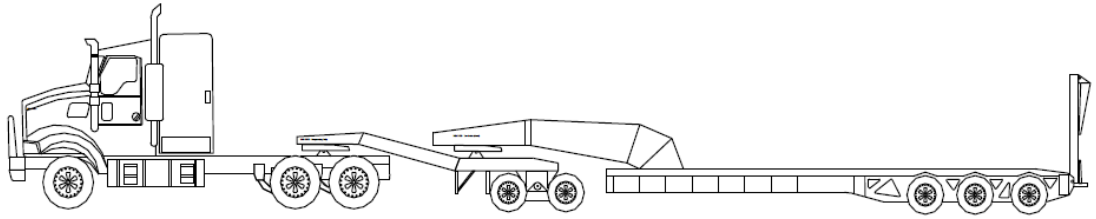
***axle ground contact width*** means the distance between the outside of the two outer tyres of the same axle where they contact the ground.



***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.



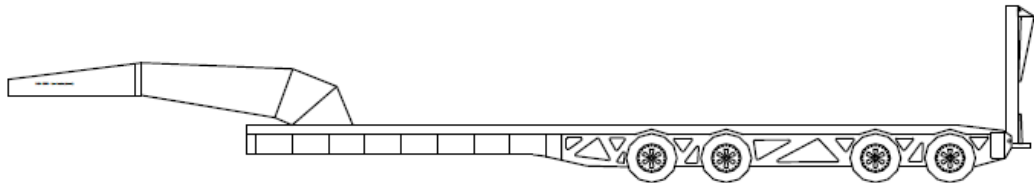
*low loader or compensating dolly*



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

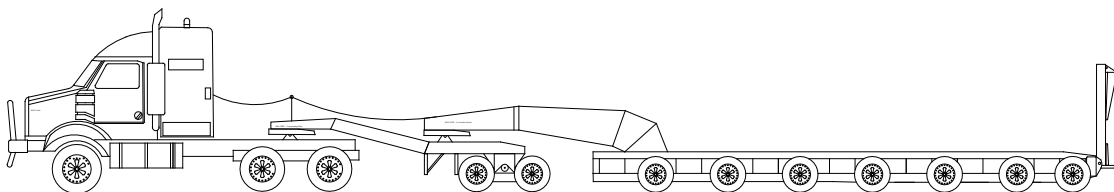
**indivisible item** means an item which cannot, without disproportionate effort, expense or risk of damage, be divided into two or more loads for the purpose of transport on public roads.

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



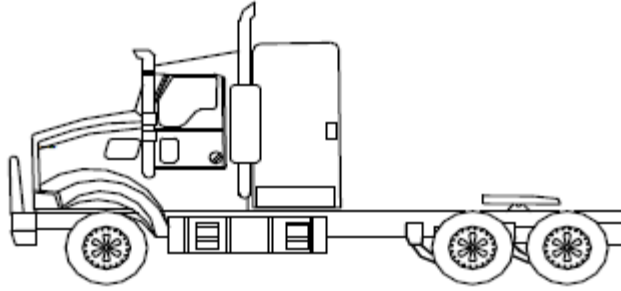
*low loader*

**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*

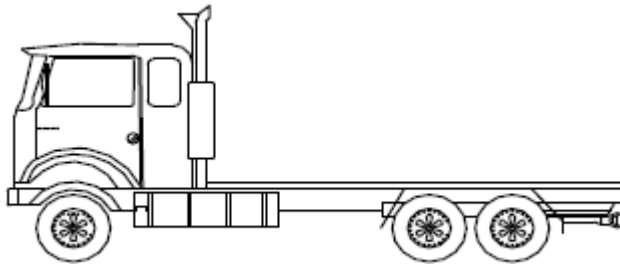
**prime mover** means a truck designed to have a semi-trailer attached via a fifth wheel coupling (or drawbar type coupling in the case of a platform trailer), and which does not have any other means to carry a load.



*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.

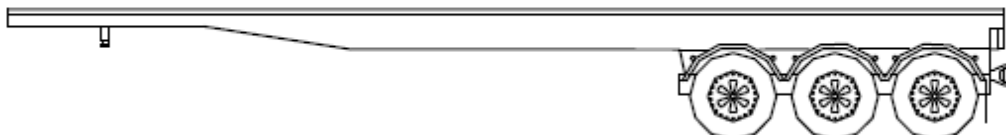
**rigid truck** means a truck which has a body constructed to take a load.



*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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