

50 MAX HIGH PRODUCTIVITY MOTOR VEHICLES (50MAX HPMVS) Q & A.

Q. What are 50MAX HPMVs?

A. 50MAX HPMVs are trucks that are slightly longer than standard 44 tonne vehicles and have an additional axle (9 in total) in order to operate at 50 tonnes maximum total weight, hence 50MAX. The modified design means that these trucks can carry more, but they perform on the road in the same way as a standard 44 tonne truck.

Q. Why are we introducing 50MAX HPMVs?

A. The neutral impact on roads will allow greater network access, particularly on the extensive local road network and the more remote state highways where pavement strength is insufficient to allow higher axle loads. Until now the weight restrictions on some bridges and roads has kept bigger trucks off many important freight routes, with freight operators having to dispatch smaller trucks, and more of them, to pick up and deliver freight on the 90,000 kilometres of New Zealand's road network. These routes are important for the country's freight task, however, they are not built to the same carrying strength as the 4,500 kilometres of high volume freight routes that are being upgraded for full HPMVs (which can carry up to 62 tonnes). Introducing 50MAX HPMVs will mean more flexibility for freight operators and greater efficiencies for their fleets, this will in turn translate to reduced costs for freight customers and end consumers

Q. Why do we need to be so specific with vehicle design?

A. To ensure the vehicles can cross almost all bridges on the network and have a neutral pavement wear. Many of the country's older and smaller bridges have shorter spans and spreading the axles allows the truck and trailer to spread the weight being carried over more of the bridge, therefore allowing the heavier vehicles to traverse a greater number of the country's road structures. Because of the costs of upgrading these roads and structures, and the relatively lower volumes of freight moving on them, it would not be in the best economic interests of the country to upgrade them.

Q. Who has been involved in the development of the 50MAX HPMV concept?

A. This has been a joint NZTA and Road Controlling Authority Forum (through their research and guidelines group) project, working together with the MOT and RTF.

Q. What are the implications for road safety?

A. 50MAX HPMVs, like any other HPMV have to meet a higher standard of vehicle performance. This includes increased resistance to roll over and the inclusion of electronic braking systems. There's also the benefit in having newer, not to mention fewer and safer trucks and trailers on the road. The cost to an operator of converting their existing rigs or buying new is relatively low, but the freight efficiency and safety gains for our communities from carrying more freight with fewer trucks are huge.

Q. What are the benefits for New Zealand communities?

A. The movement of more freight on fewer trucks means a reduction of transport costs which flows through to the producers, their communities and the customer. In the short term, operational cost savings would be expected to flow to road transport operators, which would offset the cost of vehicle modifications. Over time competition among transport operators will transfer benefits to the community that produces the goods.

Further information on the economic benefits is available in the Business Case located here:

www.nzta.govt.nz/vehicle/your/hpmv/50max-hpmv.html

Q. When will the first of these vehicles be on the road?

A. There are existing 9 axle vehicles operating at 44 tonnes and at 23m which are ready for permitting at 50MAX once networks are approved for access. Some networks are expected to be available in late 2013.

Q. What current vehicles can perform as a 50MAX HPMV?

A. The NZTA has undertaken analysis of 50MAX pro-forma vehicles and their impact on pavements and bridges. The NZTA also has a report on the 9 axle pro-forma vehicles together with a business case on the economic benefits of introducing 50MAX HPMVs.

These reports are available here: www.nzta.govt.nz/vehicle/your/hpmv/50max-hpmv.html

ROAD CONTROLLING AUTHORITY (RCA) QUESTIONS:

Q. Will permits be route specific or region wide?

A. Permits will be issued region wide with restricted bridges defined.

Q. How will 50MAX affect bridges?

A. Bridges with spans greater than 25-30m may be subject to restrictions. NZTA will assist RCAs to define which bridges and the appropriate restriction. A guide for assessing bridges is available here:

www.nzta.govt.nz/vehicle/your/hpmv/docs/assessment-of-hpmv-load-limits-for-bridges.pdf

Q. How will 50MAX affect pavements?

A. 50MAX HPMV are designed to have no greater pavement wear than of the current 44 tonne vehicle fleet.

Q. Will the agency look at 'before and after' effects of putting these trucks on local roads?

A. The NZTA will be carefully monitoring the effect of the introduction of these trucks on bridges and pavements, but initial reports demonstrate that there should not be any additional wear and tear.

Q. Who will issue permits?

A. It is proposed that NZTA will permit on behalf of councils to reduce the work load on permit issuing; however, some Councils may prefer to retain the permitting process themselves.

Q. How long will a permit be valid for?

A. Two years - this is the same as other HPMV permits.

Q. How do Councils assess their bridges?

A. Guidance is available on the 50MAX HPMV web page at www.nzta.govt.nz/vehicle/your/hpmv/50max-hpmv.html for councils to assist with the assessment of bridges; you are also welcome to contact your NZTA regional office

Q. What do councils need to do to open up their network to 50MAX HPMVs?

A. Advise NZTA of their willingness to allow access to their network, advise what their restricted bridges are and provide delegation to the NZTA to permit on their behalf if they wish to reduce permitting workload.

Q. What does a council need to do if they wish to open up a restricted bridge?

A. If a truck operator can present a significant economic or social benefit to the local community by setting up the route, the Rooding Authority should consider the application seriously and involve the NZTA in the approvals process. A solution in terms of strengthening or maintaining road assets may be available in the short or long term. Contact your local NZTA Planning and Investment team to discuss.

INDUSTRY QUESTIONS.

Q. What's the benefit for a freight operator?

A. Although the productivity benefits of the 50MAX HPMV truck are lower than full HPMV, industry should find the access to more routes beneficial, resulting in more efficient trucks on more routes. With a 5 tonne improvement in productivity per trip, 50MAX HPMVs will help those that move the freight and those that own it to save costs and will mean fewer vehicles on the road to carry the same amount of freight

Q. What other vehicles will be considered?

A. Operators continue to be able to submit other vehicle configuration designs for consideration, these will undergo a technical analysis to determine acceptance.

Q. Will a 50MAX HPMV be required to display a yellow 'H' sign like other HPMV?

A. Yes

Q. What if I get a contract for a route that is not currently permitted for Class 1?

A. Special cases that would bring economic benefits to a local community will be considered, and the roading authority may see fit to do what's needed to make the route useable.

Q. What are the implications for RUC?

A. The NZTA and MOT are reviewing a special RUC rates for operating at 50 tonnes which will be established and are expected to be in place by 1 July 2013.