

Vehicle Dimensions and Mass Rule 2016

Overview of changes for the freight industry

INFORMATION SHEET

February 2017



This is a summary of the main changes in the new Vehicle Dimensions and Mass (VDAM) Rule 2016, to give you a sense of what the changes mean for you and others you work with in the industry. Changes to specialist vehicles and buses, and overdimension vehicles are detailed separately.

Please refer to the VDAM Rule 2016 as your main source of information, to ensure you know and understand all the details and specified requirements of how you can legally operate. A few changes are made in related regulations – these are explained over the page.

BEFORE YOU MAKE ANY CHANGES OR DECISIONS

The VDAM Rule 2016 is intended to set a reasonable balance between road safety, productivity and managing New Zealand's road infrastructure. Whether you are looking to change your fleet or need to make a permitting decision, we encourage you to gather information that helps you make a balanced decision.

CHANGES TO GENERAL ACCESS FOR MASS, WIDTH AND HEIGHT

All areas of the industry should be aware of these changes, whether you are a heavy vehicle operator, importer, manufacturer, inspector or certifier, permit issuer, or road controlling authority.

Making a small change to a vehicle may enable you to load more efficiently and reduce the number of trips you need to make. There may also be opportunities to positively impact a community (ie tourism) or explore the use of more modern technologies that are safer or kinder to the environment.

If you are considering making changes to mass, width or height, please check that your vehicle will be issued a permit (if required) or that the routes that you travel remain suitable (ie bridge heights).

GROSS MASS LIMITS REFER TO RULE FOR FURTHER DETAIL AND SPECIFIED REQUIREMENTS/CONDITIONS

FOR	FROM	TO	RULE REFERENCE
7-axle combinations with a minimum wheelbase of 16.8m	44,000kg	45,000kg	Section 4.11 (3)
8-axle combinations with a minimum wheelbase of 17.4m	44,000kg	46,000kg	

Note: These increases are available on approved routes shown on the 45/46 tonne map at nzta.govt.nz/45-46-tonne-general-access-changes. Permits are required for local roads not shown on the map. On 1 December 2017, these limits will be deemed general access.

Approved over-length simple trailer combinations (specified requirements)	36,000kg	40,000kg	4.3(8), (9)
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WIDTH

FROM	TO	RULE REFERENCE
2.50m width (additional allowance for load securing devices)	2.55m width (inclusive of load securing devices)	Section 3 and schedule 2

Exceptions include: up to 70mm either side (in addition to 2.55m) for close proximity monitoring systems (CPMS). Mirror width does not extend beyond overall 2.98m width maximum. Up to 25mm either side to attach aerodynamic devices.

HEIGHT

FROM	TO	RULE REFERENCE
4.25 m height (additional allowance for load securing devices)	4.30m height (inclusive of load securing devices)	Section 3 and schedule 2

Exceptions: allow operators with suitable and specified technology to temporarily exceed the 4.30m height limit when raising the vehicle to clear obstacles. Refer to section 3.6 of the rule.

WEIGHING TOLERANCES AND WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COMPLIANCE

It's important you are aware of the revised tolerances to ensure you remain compliant and help maintain safety on the road. All mass tolerances are now consolidated in the Land Transport (Offences and Penalties) Regulations 1999. The changes to weighing tolerances reflect the accuracy of modern weighing techniques and technologies.

The Commercial Vehicle Investigation Unit (CVIU) has updated their enforcement processes and procedures to reflect these regulation changes.

WEIGHING TOLERANCES

REDUCED TO (for all vehicles)

- **500kg** for all individual axles and gross mass limits.
- **1000kg** for axle sets (eg a tri-axle set at the rear of a semi-trailer) other than steer axles.

APPLYING FOR AND GRANTING PERMITS

If you issue permits, please familiarise yourself with the changes to the rule and any material you use, from ordering replacement manuals to updating permit information on your website.

For specialist or overdimension vehicles, please read the 'What's changed' documents specifically for those heavy vehicles and refer to the rule for detailed permitting information.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AFTER 1 FEBRUARY 2017

A two-stage approach is being taken to bringing in the new gross mass limits.

From 1 February 2017 until 30 November 2017, vehicles operating at the new gross mass limits will be able to use routes specified by the Transport Agency. These will be based on routes shown on the 45/46 tonne map. A permit may be required for use on local roads and operators are encouraged to check permitting with road controlling authorities (RCAs) before making any changes. This allows time for the completion of bridge inspections to identify any future route restrictions required.

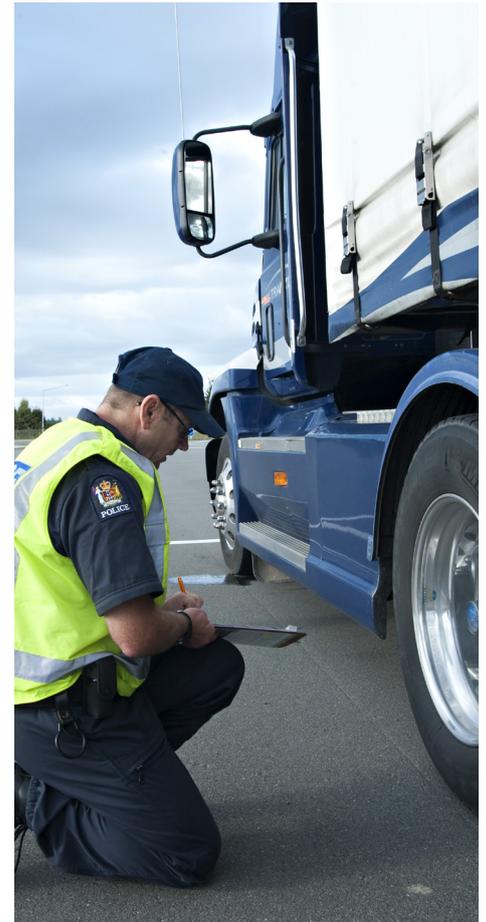
From 1 December 2017, vehicles operating at the new limits will be deemed general access and will not require permitting.

The VDAM Rule 2016 also allows for bulk permitting of identified prime movers (towing vehicles) to be 'mixed and matched' in approved combinations – saving time and effort for larger operators. We are currently developing systems to enable this approach which will be available at a later date.

REFERENCE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A number of documents are being updated to reflect the revised rule.

Please visit www.nzta.govt.nz/vdamrule2016 for more information.



WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please check our website nzta.govt.nz/vdamrule2016 for more information, including the VDAM Rule 2016 and revised documents.

If you have any questions regarding how the rule impacts your work, you can send enquiries to:

- Permitting/overdimension/specialist vehicles/network access: frr@nzta.govt.nz
- Vehicle questions: Andrew.Hilson@nzta.govt.nz
- Temporary RUC rates: RUCAssessments@nzta.govt.nz