

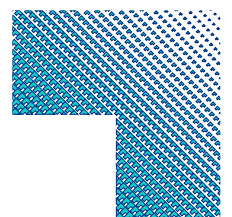


Heavy Vehicle National Amendment Regulation (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2026

Explanatory Document

National Transport Commission

4 March, 2026



Report Outline

Title	Heavy Vehicle National Amendment Regulation (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2026
Type of report	Information report – Public consultation
Purpose	To support the public consultation process for the Heavy Vehicle National Amendment Regulation (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2026.
Key words	Australian Design Rules, Heavy Vehicle National Law, Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation. Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation
Submission details	<p>The NTC will accept submissions until Wednesday 25 March 2026 online at www.ntc.gov.au or by mail to:</p> <p>National Transport Commission Public submission – Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation Amendment 2026 Level 3, 600 Bourke Street Melbourne VIC 3000</p>
Attribution	<p>This work should be attributed as follows:</p> <p>Source: National Transport Commission (2026) <i>Heavy Vehicle National Amendment Regulation (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2026 Explanatory Document</i>, NTC, Melbourne.</p> <p>If you have adapted, modified or transformed this work in any way, please use the following:</p> <p>Source: based on National Transport Commission (2026) <i>Heavy Vehicle National Amendment Regulation (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2026 Explanatory Document</i>, NTC, Melbourne.</p>
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Executive summary

The **Heavy Vehicle National Law 2012 (HVNL)** regulates heavy vehicles above 4.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass, and prescribes requirements for heavy vehicle standards, the mass and dimensions of heavy vehicles, load restraint, preventing drivers from speeding and driving fatigued, and imposes duties on parties in the chain of responsibility.

The **Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation (HV(MDL)NR)** and the **Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation (HV(VS)NR)** support the HVNL by specifying detailed technical requirements for heavy vehicles operating across participating jurisdictions.

The amendments set out in the **Heavy Vehicle National Amendment Regulation (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2026** make targeted changes to the **HV(MDL)NR** and **HV(VS)NR** to address identified gaps, clarify existing provisions, and support the safe and practical operation of heavy vehicles.

In summary, the proposed amendments:

- establish requirements for the fitment and use of rear bump devices on heavy vehicles, and clarify their treatment when measuring vehicle length
- clarify the treatment of closed-circuit television (CCTV) system components fitted to buses when measuring vehicle width
- require that vehicles granted exemptions continue to comply with applicable approval conditions
- permit the use of devices that emit a regular, intermittent sound when a vehicle is reversing, when the left turn signal is activated, or when a retractable axle is in operation
- ensure that all emergency and police vehicles are excluded from Australian Design Rule 65 speed limiting requirements.

The NTC is seeking comments on the proposed amendments. The consultation period is open until **Wednesday 25 March 2026**.

Context

The purpose of this report is to support the public consultation process and provide stakeholders with:

- an explanation of the proposed changes to the **HV(MDL)NR** and **HV(VS)NR** and the reasons for them; and
- a draft of the proposed changes.



1 Amendments to the HV(MDL)NR and the HV(VS)NR

Key points

- The proposed amendments to the **HV(MDL)NR** and the **HV(VS)NR** address emerging issues or other problems identified by stakeholders.
- Specifically, they:
 - establish requirements for the fitment and use of rear bump devices on heavy vehicles, and clarify their treatment when measuring vehicle length
 - clarify the treatment of closed-circuit television (CCTV) system components fitted to buses when measuring vehicle width
 - require that vehicles granted exemptions continue to comply with applicable approval conditions
 - permit the use of devices that emit a regular, intermittent sound when a vehicle is reversing, when the left turn signal is activated, or when a retractable axle is in operation
 - ensure that all emergency and police vehicles are excluded from Australian Design Rule 65 speed limiting requirements.

1. Short title

Clause [1] states that the regulation may be cited as the *Heavy Vehicle National Amendment Regulation (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2026*.

2. Commencement

Clause [2] provides for a commencement date for the regulation.

Note: *The commencement date for the regulation will be determined after any required changes are made resulting from public consultation.*

Amendment of Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation

Note: *The amendment to the HV(MDL)NR is a consequential amendment required as a result of the rear bump device amendment to the HV(VS)NR set out in clause [8] of the Heavy Vehicle National Amendment Regulation (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2026.*

3. Regulation amended

Clause [3] provides that the *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation* is the regulation being amended.

4. Amendment of schedule 6 (Dimension requirements)

Clause [4] inserts new **section 6D** into Schedule 6 of the **HV(MDL)NR**.



New **section 6D** provides that a rear bump device fitted to a heavy vehicle is to be disregarded when measuring the length of the vehicle under **sections 3** or **4** of **Schedule 6**, where specified conditions are met.

The rear bump device must:

- be fitted in accordance with **section 7A** of **Schedule 2** of the *HV(VS)NR*; and
- not protrude more than 100 millimetres beyond the overall length of the heavy vehicle.

If these conditions are satisfied, the rear bump device is not included in the measurement of the vehicle's length. If the conditions are not met, the device must be included in the measurement.

This amendment aligns the treatment of rear bump devices with existing provisions in **Schedule 6** that disregard certain safety-related fittings and devices (including front blind spot mirrors, indirect vision devices, and front-end devices) when measuring vehicle length.

The amendment is intended to support the use of rear protective devices designed to mitigate low-speed impact damage, without affecting compliance with prescribed length limits.

Supporting information

Schedule 6, Part 2 sets out length requirements for heavy vehicles. Existing **sections 6A**, **6B** and **6C** provide that certain safety-related fittings and devices are to be disregarded when measuring vehicle length. These provisions are intended to ensure that the fitment of safety equipment does not adversely affect compliance with dimension limits.

Prior to this amendment, rear bump devices were not expressly disregarded for the purpose of measuring vehicle length. This limited the uptake of such devices, despite their safety function. New **section 6D** addresses this by providing a consistent approach to the treatment of rear bump devices, subject to defined conditions.



Amendment of Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation

5. Regulation amended

Clause [5] provides that the *Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation* is the regulation being amended.

6. Amendment of section 8 (Measurement of width of vehicles)

Clause [6] inserts new **subsection (6A)** into **section 8** of the *HV(VS)NR*.

New **subsection (6A)** provides that a component of a closed-circuit television (CCTV) system fitted to a bus for operational, safety or security purposes is to be disregarded when measuring the width of the vehicle, provided that:

- the total lateral protrusion of the component from the bus does not exceed 100 millimetres; and
- the component is fitted at least 2 metres above ground level.

If either condition is not met, the component is included when measuring the overall width of the vehicle.

Supporting information

Section 8 sets out how certain devices and systems are disregarded when measuring the width of a heavy vehicle. Existing subsections provide that mirrors, indirect vision devices, signalling devices, tyres, and other safety equipment are not included in width measurements, subject to limits on lateral protrusion or overall width.

The 100 millimetres lateral protrusion limit in **subsection (6A)** is consistent with the limits applied in subsections **8(4)(b)**, **8(5)**, **8(6)** and **8(9)** for other devices. This ensures that the treatment of CCTV components aligns with the established framework for measuring vehicle width.

7. Amendment of Sch 1 (Vehicle standards relating to ADRs applying to single heavy vehicles)

Clause [7] amends **section 4A** of **Schedule 1** to require that vehicles granted exemptions under **section 4A** continue to comply with the conditions applying to the approval under which they satisfied the type approval pathway.

Supporting information

Section 4A currently allows a vehicle to be exempt from compliance with certain ADRs if it has satisfied the type approval pathway under **section 15** of the *Road Vehicle Standards Rules 2019* and is entered on the RAV.

The amendment ensures that vehicles granted this exemption continue to meet all approval conditions. This maintains alignment with approved safety standards and addresses a potential regulatory gap where a vehicle could otherwise remain on the RAV despite not complying with approval conditions.



8. Amendment of Schedule 2 (Other vehicle standards applying to single heavy vehicles)

7A Rear bump devices

Clause [8](1) inserts new **section 7A** into **Schedule 2** of the **HV(VS)NR**.

New **section 7A** establishes requirements for the fitment and use of rear bump devices on heavy vehicles.

A rear bump device may be fitted to a heavy vehicle if it:

- is constructed from an energy-absorbing material, such as rubber or polyurethane; and
- is used to mitigate low-speed impacts between the heavy vehicle and loading facilities or equipment.

A rear bump device must not be used to:

- extend the length of the heavy vehicle's load carriage area; or
- carry goods, passengers, or any other load.

Supporting information

Part 2 of **Schedule 2** sets out general safety requirements for heavy vehicles, covering design, construction, and equipment standards, including steering, visibility, mirrors, tyres, mudguards, and other safety features.

Prior to this amendment, the regulation did not prescribe minimum requirements for rear bump devices. This amendment establishes clear parameters to promote the fitment of devices that reduce the risk of low-speed collisions with loading facilities or equipment, while preventing their use for extending the vehicle or carrying loads.

This amendment complements the corresponding amendment in the *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation*, which clarifies how rear bump devices are treated when measuring vehicle length. Together, these amendments support the safe and consistent use of rear bump devices on heavy vehicles.

11 Horns, alarms etc.

Clause [8](2) amends **section 11(4)** of **Schedule 2** to clarify the operation of audible warning devices on heavy vehicles.

The amendment provides that a device fitted to a heavy vehicle may emit a regular, intermittent sound while:

- the vehicle is reversing or in reverse gear; or
- the vehicle's left turn signal is activated; or
- the vehicle's retractable axle is being operated; and
- the device is not louder than necessary to alert a person near the vehicle.

Supporting information

Section 11 requires heavy vehicles to be fitted with at least one horn or other device capable of giving sufficient audible warning to other road users.

Subsection (2) prohibits devices that mimic sirens, exhaust whistles,



compression whistles, or repeater horns, with limited exceptions for exempt vehicles, heritage emergency vehicles used for display, and anti-theft alarms that cannot operate while the ignition is on.

The amendment addresses ambiguity around left-turn alarms and audible warnings for retractable axles. Without this clarification, such devices could be misinterpreted as prohibited repeater horns, potentially preventing operators from fitting legitimate safety alerts.

By explicitly permitting these devices to operate under the specified conditions, the amendment enhances safety for drivers and vulnerable road users, while maintaining limits on sound levels to prevent undue disturbance or confusion.

109 Speed limiting

Clause [8](3) & (4) amend **section 109** of **Schedule 2** to ensure that all emergency and police vehicles are excluded from **Australian Design Rule 65 (ADR 65)** road speed limiting requirements.

New **subsection (3A)** clarifies that any requirement in **ADR 65** relating to road speed limiting does not apply to any emergency or police vehicles. **Section 109(4)(a)** is omitted, removing the current limitation that only exempts certain emergency or police vehicles meeting the criteria in **subsections (1)–(2)**.

Supporting information

Section 109 currently requires certain heavy vehicles, specifically buses over 14.5 t GVM and prime movers over 15 t GVM built after 1987, to comply with third edition ADR 65. For heavy vehicles used in road trains, the maximum permitted speed is 100 km/h. Some exemptions exist for emergency and police vehicles, buses fitted for standing passengers, and older 2-axle prime movers used in primary production.

Under the existing drafting, the exemption for emergency and police vehicles only applies if they also meet the type or configuration requirements in **subsections (1) and (2)**. This creates an unintended outcome where some emergency and police vehicles remain subject to **ADR 65**.

The amendment ensures that all emergency and police vehicles, regardless of weight, manufacture date, or configuration, are exempt from **ADR 65** speed limiting requirements.



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