

HEAVY COMBINATION VEHICLE TOWING 2020

There has been recent discussion between Waka Kotahi and the vehicle recovery sector and Heavy Haulage Assn (HHA) around the recovery of disabled laden HPMV combinations. More recently this culminated in one recovery provider releasing a capability statement based on what Waka Kotahi has confirmed is a permit based on an initial policy position. Furthermore, HHA has confirmed some variability in the permits that have been issued against the policy. Waka Kotahi accepts this has resulted in a fragmented approach that needs to be resolved and a pan industry accord is expected to be the next step toward finalising the policy position.

The sharing of the attached document is approved by Waka Kotahi however, they stress this is the initial draft and state they will be working with industry to create an accord for all HV tow movements.

It is advisable to mention that if operators are seeking to have recovery operators tow combinations, they should seek assurances the recovery service providers have:

- The correctly rated vehicles capable for the service duty required;
- Overweight permits to understand the route restrictions;
- An over dimension permit which gives the piloting requirements; and
- All other matters pertaining to a compliant vehicle recovery operator.

A draft version of the policy document is attached and has been approved by Waka Kotahi for distribution. This version was kindly provided by the Heavy Haulage Association NZ.

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Heavy Combination Vehicle Towing in New Zealand

The NZTA has undertaken a project to clarify the recovery and towing of disabled heavy vehicle combinations from our roads. This relates to Rule 3.14(11) and how it is applied and the requirements of the vehicles to carry out these situations.

The Agency has undertaken an audit of the information related to the specification of heavy recovery vehicles within our record system and found many of the details are incorrect. Verification of the correct details and specifications is required for approvals to carry out heavy combination vehicle recoveries and towing.

Evidence of details and specifications is to be provided by the vehicle owner using the supplied data sheet. This information will then be updated in the Agencies system. There are also recommendations for safety items and vehicle signage requirements for permitting.

*A **recovery** is from the roadway to the nearest safe area. While the rule states the traffic volume, vehicle load, and the ability to undertake repair safely at the roadside, off the roadway are to be taken into account, they do not preclude a safe area where those considerations are not met.*

*The intent of the rule 3.14(11) is **for the removal of a hazard only as far as necessary to ensure that the hazard can be cleared of the roadway.***

Any subsequent travel of the vehicle past a safe area is considered a **tow** and must meet the conditions of the tow permit.

The tow permit will allow suitably specified vehicles approved by the agency to tow an over dimension load a maximum of 200km's to a place of repair or area suitable for devanning or separation of the load where previously not possible. Where the conditions of the permit cannot be met the disabled combination is to remain at the nearest safe area till the conditions can be met or a separate permit can be obtained.

If brake control of the combination is not possible, the combination must be separated at the nearest safe area.

Vehicle Requirements

- Appropriate and correct labelling of recovery system
- Sufficient MTM rating and GCM to undertake the tow
- DG placards as required
- Data updated with NZTA
- Minimum 20% loading of the front axle at all times
- The vehicle must hold the relevant overweight permit for the roads intended to operate

Driver Requirements

- BESS certification
- V Endorsement
- Class 5 License
- Current Logbook

Other Requirements/Recommendations

- Use of travel locks for under reach
- Cam locks for under reach arm

3.14(11) In Detail

- 3.14(11) permits short tows to "nearest safe place" without an overdimension permit. Tows are only permitted as far as necessary to ensure that the hazard can be cleared off the roadway.
- In some circumstances the disabled vehicle can be taken further than the closest safe place, for example:

- To avoid congestion;
- Where the vehicle load urgently needs to be unloaded in a specific area (either because it would be dangerous for the load to be left, or there are animal welfare issues) and applying for a permit would result in a material delay. Value of the load, or urgent delivery requirements is not a relevant consideration; and
- Where a suitable area is necessary for a roadside repair to be undertaken safely. A roadside repair is a minor repair which can be completed without specialised equipment.

Even where one of these situations applies, the extra distance travelled should be relatively small. In all cases Waka Kotahi would expect that the “nearest safe area” would be within 20km of the vehicle becoming disabled.

- It is reasonable for the recovery operator to consult with the attending enforcement officer (if one is in attendance) where they propose the location of the nearest safe area. The enforcement officer can offer advice and advise the operator if the proposed nearest safe area is unsuitable or if there is a closer nearest safe area that is suitable. If there is no enforcement officer present then the recovery operator should advise traffic operations (or equivalent) by phone call the location of that nearest safe area and that is where the recovery is to be made.
- In cases where a tow of over 20 km is undertaken under 3.14(11), it is best practise for the tow operator to record the reasons for the long tow, communications with the enforcement officer/Waka Kotahi and what other options were considered as the “nearest safe area”.
- From the nearest safe area, the recovery should be completed in one of the following ways:
 - The load broken down and towed under the general access rules;
 - Under the existing truck permit following a roadside repair;
 - Under an over-dimension tow permit;
 - By using a new tractor unit with a permit for the new combination.
- Due to the potential weight, length and distance towed Waka Kotahi has included a condition in the permits that the driver maintains a logbook in order to manage fatigue. A tow authority only records the length of the tow, not all the time the driver has been working recently. A tow authority is not an approved logbook under the Land Transport Act/ Work Time and Logbooks Rule 2007.



Overdimension Permit

Permit Number: 123456 Version: 1

This permit is issued under section 6.49 of the Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Dimensions and Mass 2016.

This permit applies to the overdimension load and/or vehicle(s) described below. This permit is invalid if altered without authority of the Agency or if the vehicle transporting the overdimension load or the overdimension vehicle is not being operated by the operator named on this permit.

This permit must be carried in any readable format in the permitted vehicle or the vehicle transporting the permitted load for the period of travel covered by the permit and be produced upon demand for inspection by the on-road supervisor, an operator of a pilot vehicle or an enforcement officer.

Name of operator: Waka Kotahi

Address: Private Bag
11777
Palmerston
North

Registration number(s) of overdimension vehicle(s):
WAKA1 KOTAHI

Load Description: Heavy Vehicle Recovery Operation

From address: North Island

To address: North Island

Critical Conditions: A vehicle operating under a permit must comply with the following critical conditions:

- (a) the vehicle or its load must not exceed the lesser of –
 - i. the dimension limits for its Category stated in the permit; or
 - ii. if the permit states the maximum width, a width of that maximum plus 0.5m.
- (b) the operator must ensure pilots as specified on this permit are provided or, if not specified, as required by the rule.

Additional Conditions: This is a Category 2 permit.

This permit is issued for the tow of a disabled vehicle from a safe area. This permit does not allow multiple tows of the same disabled vehicle or the transportation of a disabled vehicle that has previously been towed.

This permit covers the maximum distance of 200kms from the safe area.

This movement is restricted to a maximum 70km/hr speed restriction.

The recovery vehicle must utilize the disabled vehicles brakes.

The driver of the recovery vehicle must maintain and use a logbook and comply with worktime rules.

This movement must be accompanied by a minimum of one Class 2 Pilot during the daytime and two Class 2 during the hours of darkness.

This movement is exempt from 6.34(3) where a Category 2 vehicle/load requires a Class 1 Pilot during the hours of darkness.

Use of this permit exempts travel time requirements outlined for this category under 6.22 of the vehicle dimension and mass rule.

Route restrictions prescribed in the relevant overweight permit must be followed.

OVERSIZE signs are to be attached at the front and rear of the recovery combination.

LONG LOAD FOLLOWS signs to be attached at the front of the pilot vehicle

Vehicles and moves over 25m long to carry and provide level crossing approval upon request.

A record of the tow must be kept and made available to Waka Kotahi on request in the provided template.

Period of permit: 1 Jan 2021 to 1 April 2021

Permit Category:

This permit is granted subject to the vehicle/load complying with the dimension limits for the category stated on this permit and being moved in accordance with the operating requirements for that category as prescribed in Land Transport Rule (41001): Vehicle Dimensions and Mass 2016.

Permit authorised by: David Brown
Case Officer

Date permit issued: 2 Dec 2020