



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development and Communications

# Road Vehicle Standards



## Low ATM trailers – Overview

On 1 July 2021 new Road Vehicle Standards (RVS) legislation for trailers was introduced.

The Australian Government regulates road vehicles to help keep Australians safe on our roads.

On 1 July 2021, the *Road Vehicle Standards Act 2018* (RVSA) replaced the *Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989* (MVSA).

The Road Vehicle Standards Rules 2019 are made under the RVSA. Together, they form the Road Vehicle Standards (RVS) legislation.

The RVS legislation will ensure vehicles in the Australian market are safe, secure and environmentally-friendly.

### What has changed for the trailer industry?

Under the RVS legislation, manufacturers and importers of trailers **with an aggregate trailer mass (ATM)\* of 4.5 tonnes or less (low ATM trailers)** need an approval before they can provide a trailer type to the Australian market.

Low ATM trailers include caravans, dog trailers and pig trailers.

Under the MVSA, trailer manufacturers and importers self-certified that a trailer complied with [Vehicle Standards Bulletin 1](#) (VSB1 – Building Small Trailers). This certification was included on the trailer's identification plate.

Now, every road vehicle, including trailers, will need to have vehicle and compliance information listed on the [Register of Approved Vehicles](#) (RAV), an online database of vehicles that have met the requirements of the RVS legislation and have been approved for provision to the Australian market.

\*ATM = the trailer's total mass when carrying the maximum load recommended by the manufacturer.

The vehicle standards for trailers will still be the applicable Australian Design Rules (ADRs).

[Vehicle Standards Bulletin 1](#) has been updated to Revision 6 and has easy-to-read information about the ADR requirements for most trailers and the most used ways to show they comply.

Some manufacturers may need to refer directly to the ADRs to confirm they comply.

### Approvals

Two approval pathways will be available:

- [vehicle type approval](#), and
- [concessional RAV entry approval](#).

These pathways have different eligibility criteria and approval conditions, if an approval is granted.

### Vehicle type approvals

Under the RVS legislation, trailer manufacturers and importers providing **more than 4 low ATM trailers** to the Australian market in a 12-month period will have to get a **vehicle type approval** for their trailer type.

A vehicle type approval covers a make of trailer and a trailer category.

This may include any number of models that meet the definition of a trailer with a vehicle category code of TA, TB or TC.

A vehicle type approval application must include a declaration that trailers provided under the approval, if granted, will comply (or substantially comply) with the relevant national road vehicle standards.

## Eligibility for a vehicle type approval

To be able to grant a vehicle type approval, the government must be satisfied the applicant:

- has the required information demonstrating the road vehicle complies with the applicable national road vehicle standards (in rare cases, non-compliance will be permitted if the non-compliance is only in minor and inconsequential respects or the vehicle complies to an extent that makes it suitable for use on a public road in Australia – e.g. glider trailers with a longer rear overhang), AND
- has control or has access to information about the design, componentry and manufacturing process of the road vehicle type, including changes that may impact compliance with the applicable national road vehicle standards, AND
- can ensure the design, componentry and manufacturing process will consistently produce the type of road vehicle, AND
- can arrange for the Secretary or an inspector to inspect the premises where the road vehicle or componentry for the road vehicle is manufactured, AND
- can access and provide original and subsequent versions of supporting information, AND
- can ensure the supporting information for the approval is kept up-to-date, AND
- will comply with each of the standard and specified conditions that the vehicle type approval will be subject to.

## Concessional RAV entry approval

Manufacturers or importers may apply for a **concessional RAV entry approval for 4 low ATM trailers or less in a 12-month period**.

These vehicles will be entered onto the RAV, on behalf of an approval holder, vehicle by vehicle.

Applications for a concessional RAV entry approval must also include a declaration that the trailer complies (or will comply) with the relevant national road vehicle standards at the time the vehicle is entered onto the RAV.

## How do I apply?

Our online IT portal, [ROVER](#), integrates all RVS legislation activities and approvals.

To apply for an approval, you must first [create an account in ROVER](#) and fill out an online application form. This includes all of the required information, documents and declaration.

## Complying with your responsibilities

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (the department) monitors and enforces compliance with the RVS legislation.

The department encourages voluntary compliance, and undertakes informed risk-based compliance activities to confirm compliance with the RVS legislation.

## More information

- Detailed information is available in the [Guide to vehicle type approvals](#) for trailers with an aggregate trailer mass (ATM) of 4.5 tonnes or less.
- Visit the [Road Vehicle Standards laws](#) webpage.

## Contact us

If you have an enquiry, please contact us:

**Email RVSA for general information:**

[RVSAimplementation@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:RVSAimplementation@infrastructure.gov.au)

**Phone:** 1800 815 272 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm AEST, within Australia), or +61 2 6274 7444 (calling from overseas).

**Disclaimer:** Please note this information is a brief summary of information. We do not make any guarantees about the completeness of the information above as it is intended as easy-to-read background material/'quick guide' only.