

Correct as at 5th June 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: In-service certification (WoF and CoF) > General trailers > Vehicle exterior

2 Vehicle exterior

2-1 External projections

Reasons for rejection

Condition and performance (Note 1)

1. The risk of a component (Note 2) hooking a vehicle, or hooking or grazing a person, has not been minimised.
2. An ornamental object or fitting (Note 3) protrudes in such a way that it is likely to injure a person.
3. A protruding object or fitting (Note 4) that has a functional purpose is not installed so that the risk of causing injury to a person is minimised, eg the object or fitting:
 - a) is of excessively heavy construction for the purpose for which it has been fitted, or
 - b) has sharp corners, or
 - c) exceeds the vehicle's width by more than 100mm on either side.
4. A protruding component, object or fitting is not securely fitted.
5. A protruding object or fitting adversely affects the driver's vision or control.

Note 1

The external projections requirements relate to the design and maintenance of objects and fittings that protrude from the exterior of the motor vehicle with regard to the safety of other motor vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. The attachment of such objects and fittings to the vehicle is addressed in the Vehicle structure section of this manual.

Note 3

Ornamental object or fitting means any object or fitting that does not have a practical purpose.

Note 4

Functional object or fitting means an object or fitting that has a practical purpose, eg load restraints.

Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: External Projections 2001](#).

Permitted equipment

1. A motor vehicle may be fitted with a protruding ornamental or functional object or fitting.

Condition and performance

2. A protruding ornamental object or fitting must not be likely to injure a person.

3. A protruding object or fitting that has a functional purpose must be installed so that the risk of the object or fitting causing injury to a person is minimised.

4. Components of a motor vehicle, including damaged or corroded body panels, must be such that the risk of their hooking a vehicle, or hooking or grazing a person, is minimised.

5. A protruding object or fitting must not adversely affect driver vision or driver control.

2-2 Dimensions

Reasons for rejection

Mandatory equipment

1. A trailer with a GVM of 3500kg or less exceeds the dimension requirements set out in Table 2-2-1 and is not fitted with the appropriate hazard warning equipment set out in Table 2-2-2.

2. A trailer **with a GVM of 3500kg or less** exceeds the dimensions set out in Table 2-2-1 and is not:

- a) a specialist overdimension trailer (Note 6), or
- b) a trailer designed primarily to transport an overdimension load, or
- c) a trailer operating on a valid permit, exemption or approval.

Note 1

Definitions of trailer types:

- **simple trailer** means a trailer (other than a semi-trailer) that has only one axle set
- **full trailer** means a trailer with two axles sets, the foremost of which is steered by a drawbar, and includes a semi-trailer with non-steering axles (Note 4) coupled to a converter dolly
- **semi-trailer** means a trailer with only one axle set where the point of attachment to the towing vehicle or leading trailer:

a) is no further rearward than the rearmost axle of the towing vehicle or rearmost axle of the leading trailer, or

b) if the towing vehicle is a rigid vehicle (Note 5) and has more than one axle in its rear axle set, is no more than 300mm rearward of the rear axis of the towing vehicle.

Note 2

An **over-dimension trailer** is one that is either:

- a) fitted with an over-dimension piece of equipment, or
- b) designed to carry an over-dimension load that cannot be divided, eg glider trailers and large boat trailers, **or**
- c) a **specialist overdimension trailer**.

Operational requirements for such trailers are given in [Factsheet 53a – Overdimension vehicles and loads](#).

Note 3

Rear axis of a vehicle means:

- a) *trailers with one non-steering axle*: centre of that axle
- b) *trailers with a non-steering axle set consisting of two axles*: midway between those two axles if each axle has an equal number of tyres on it, or two-thirds of the distance from the lesser-tyred axle towards the greater-tyred axle, if one axle has twice as many tyres on it as the other axle.

Note 4

Non-steering axle means any axle of a vehicle, the wheels of which remain substantially parallel with the longitudinal centreline of the vehicle while the vehicle is turning.

Note 5

Rigid vehicle means a vehicle with motive power, driver's position and steering system, that does not have any pivot points to allow any part of the vehicle chassis to move or rotate in relation to any other part of the vehicle chassis, but includes a pivot steer vehicle.

Note 6

Specialist overdimension trailer means a trailer where its primary purpose is to carry out a specialist function that requires overdimension equipment, and the dismantling of the equipment would make it unusable for its intended purpose, or it would take more than four hours to dismantle the equipment.

Table 2-2-1. Dimension requirements

Note All measurements must be taken with the vehicle combination in a straight line.

Dimension	Maximum distance	Comments
Width	2.55m 1.275m from each side of the longitudinal centreline of the trailer	Measurement does not include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • direction indicators and side-marker lamps • the bulge towards the bottom of a tyre • cameras or close-proximity monitoring systems mounted on the side exterior of a vehicle that extends not more than 70mm from the side wall of the vehicle • devices for improving the aerodynamic performance of a vehicle that extend not more than 25mm from either side of a vehicle.
Overall length	12.5m (simple trailers) 11.5m (full trailers)	For a full trailer, measurement is to the centre of the towing eye.
Height	4.3m	
Forward distance	8.5m (simple and full trailers) 9.2m (semi-trailer)	Forward distance is measured from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple trailer: from the rear axis (Note 3) to the centre of the point of attachment to towing vehicle • full trailer: from the rear axis to front of trailer body/chassis (excludes drawbar) or load, whichever is foremost • semi-trailer: from the rear axis to centre of kingpin.
Rear overhang	4m	Rear overhang is measured from the rear axis to the rear of the vehicle or its load, whichever is greater.
Front overhang	2.04m radius arc ahead of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tow coupling centre (simple trailer) • turntable centre (full trailer) • kingpin centre (semi-trailer) 	Front overhang (Figure 2-2-5) is measured from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple trailer: tow coupling centre to front of trailer • full trailer: turntable centre to front of trailer body (excludes drawbar) • semi-trailer: kingpin centre to front of trailer

Table 2-2-2. Hazard warning equipment requirements for vehicles that exceed the dimensions in Table 2-2-1 (see Figure 2-2-3 for vehicle category thresholds)

Vehicle category (See Figure 2-2-3)	Dimension	Limits (up to and including)	Required hazard warning equipment
Category 1	Width/forward distance	2.55m /11.4m, or 3.1m/10.5m, or 3.7m/8.5m, or	1. Flags ¹ or panels ² fitted on each side at the front and rear as close as practical to the outside edge
	Length	25m, or	
	Front overhang	7m, or	
	Rear overhang	7m	
Category 2 (not including category 1)	Width/forward distance	2.55m /13.3m, or 4.5m/8.5m, or	1. Panels ² fitted on each side at the front and rear as close as practical to the outside edge 2. OVERSIZE sign ³ fitted at the front and rear if more than 3.1m wide
	Length	35m, or	
	Front overhang	10m, or	
	Rear overhang	10m	
Category 3 (not including category 2)	Width/forward distance	2.55m /20m 5m/20m 5m/8.5m	1. Panels ² fitted on each side at the front and rear as close as practical to the outside edge 2. OVERSIZE sign ³ fitted at the front and rear
	Front overhang	10m, or	
	Rear overhang	10m	
Category 4A (not including category 3)	Width/forward distance	11m/20m 11m/8.5m	1. Panels ² fitted on each side at the front and rear as close as practical to the outside edge 2. OVERSIZE sign ³ fitted at the front and rear
	Front overhang	10m, or	
	Rear overhang	10m	

Vehicle category (See Figure 2-2-3)	Dimension	Limits (up to and including)	Required hazard warning equipment
Category 4B	Exceeding any limit in Category 4A		1. Panels ² fitted on each side at the front and rear as close as practical to the outside edge 2. OVERSIZE sign ³ fitted at the front and rear 3. Revolving amber beacon fitted so that it is visible to approaching traffic if the vehicle is more than 3.7m wide

- Additional operational requirements may apply, eg if operated at night.

1 Flags:

- must be fluorescent yellow
- must be at least 400mm long x 300mm wide

2 Hazard warning panels:

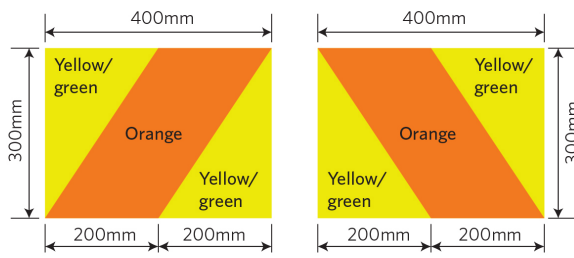
- must be reflective yellow-green with a reflective orange diagonal stripe
- comply with AS/NZS 1906.1:2007
- be frangible for those portions which extend beyond the vehicle's limits (frangible means breakable or readily deformable)
- must be of at least of the minimum dimensions and the colours specified in Figure 2-2-1

3 OVERSIZE sign:

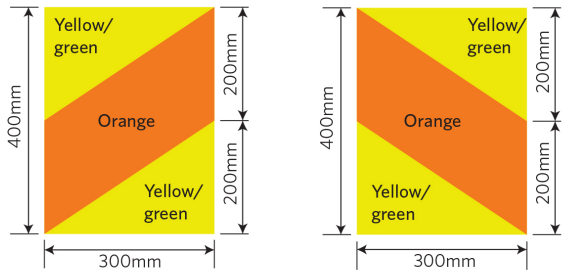
- must be black lettering on a yellow-green background
- must be at least 300mm x 1100mm in size
- be frangible if any part of the sign extends beyond the body or load of the vehicle, whichever it is attached to (frangible means breakable or readily deformable)
- may be in two parts: OVER and SIZE.

Figure 2-2-1. Hazard panel details

Display these panels



or these panels



or these panels

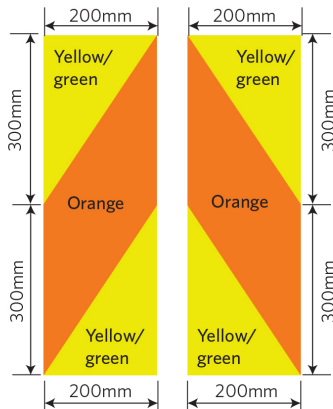


Figure 2-2-2. Hazard panel location and orientation

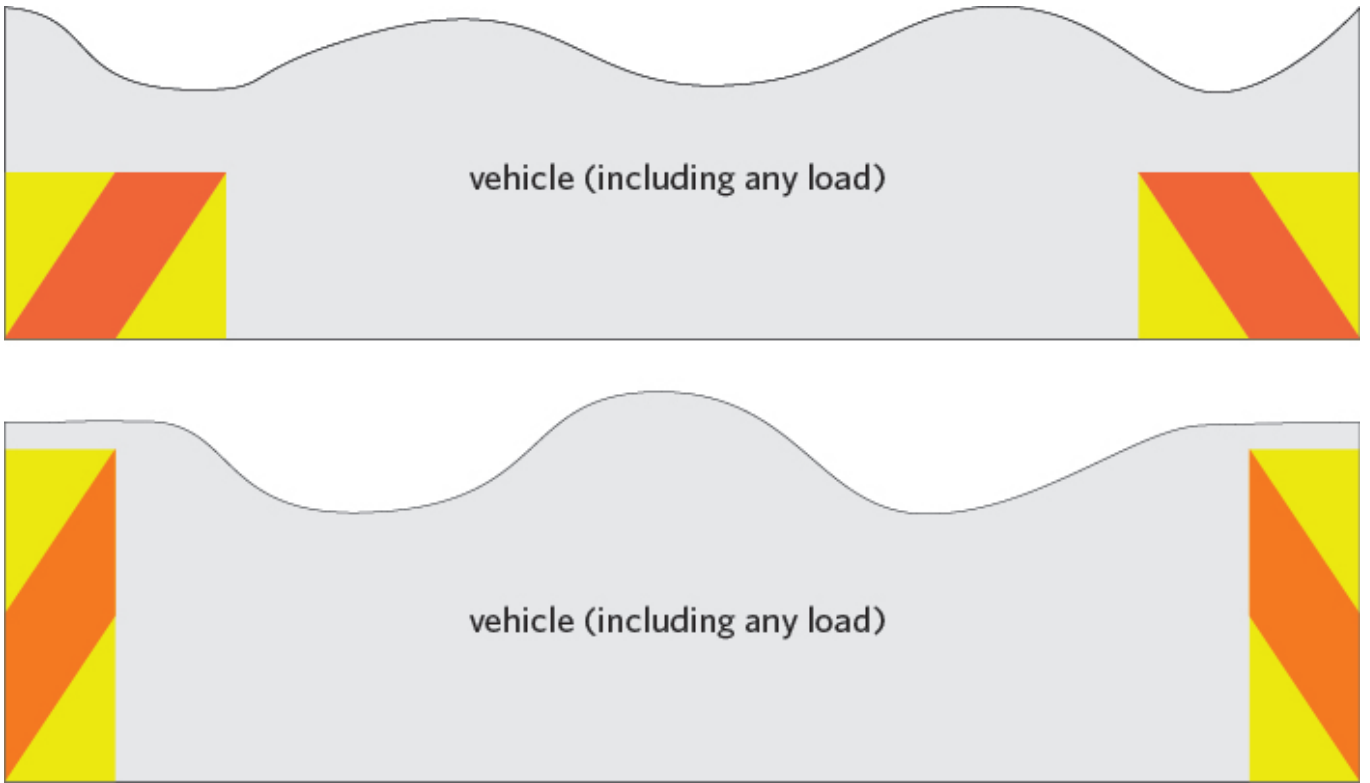
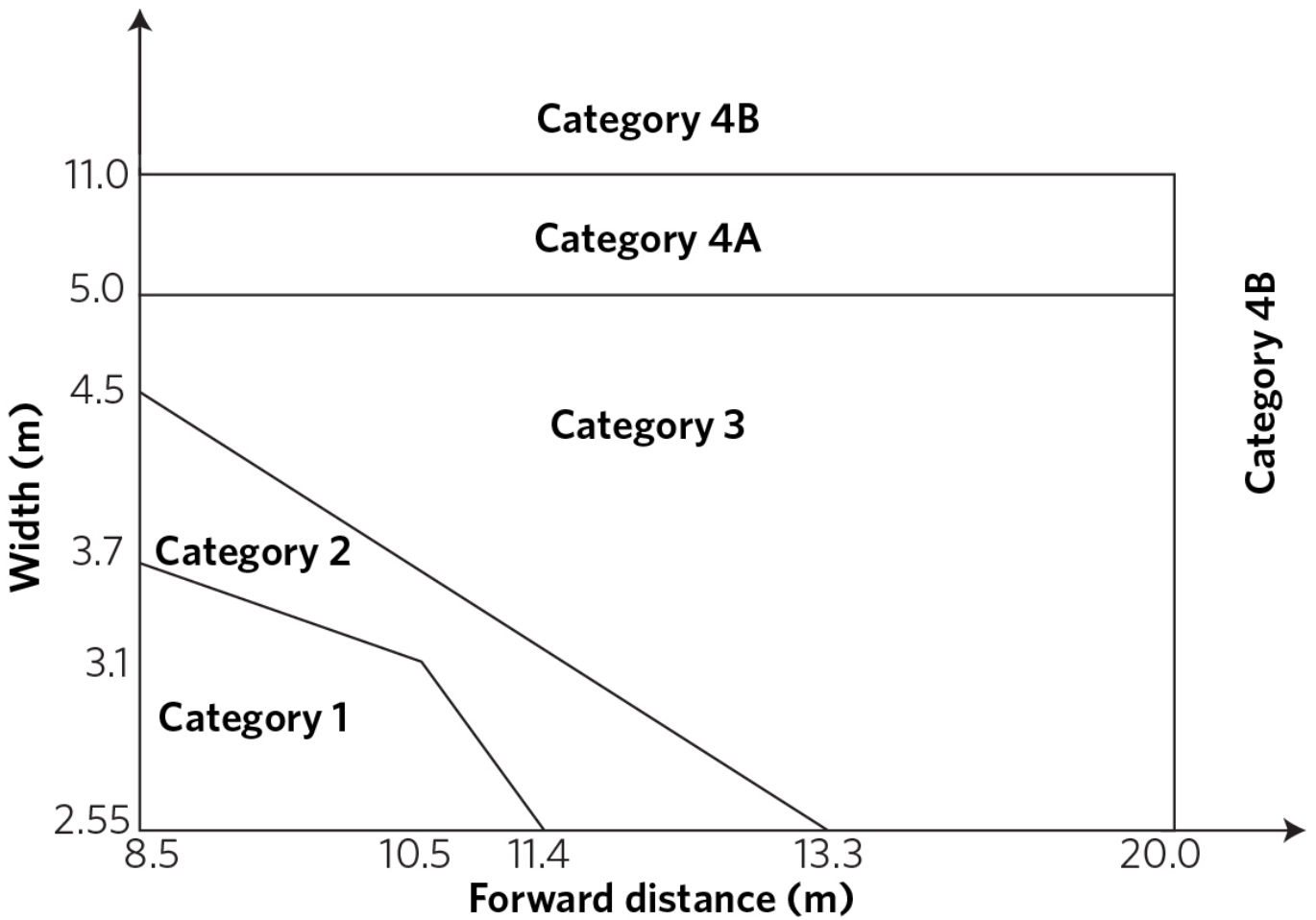


Figure 2-2-3. Vehicle categories and width/forward-distance thresholds.



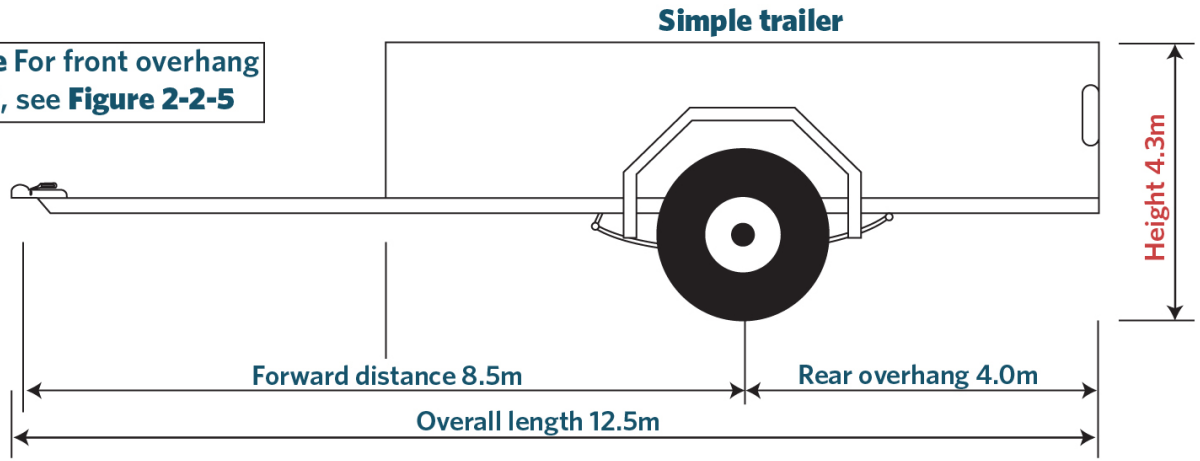
Use this figure to determine the correct category referred to in Table 2-2-2.

For the purposes of this figure, vehicles with a width less than 2.55m are deemed to have a width of 2.55m and vehicles with a forward distance of less than 8.5m are deemed to have a forward distance of 8.5m.

Figure 2-2-4. Trailer dimensions

(Note: Dimensions in red updated in VDAM 2016)

Note For front overhang limit, see **Figure 2-2-5**



Note For front overhang limit, see **Figure 2-2-5**

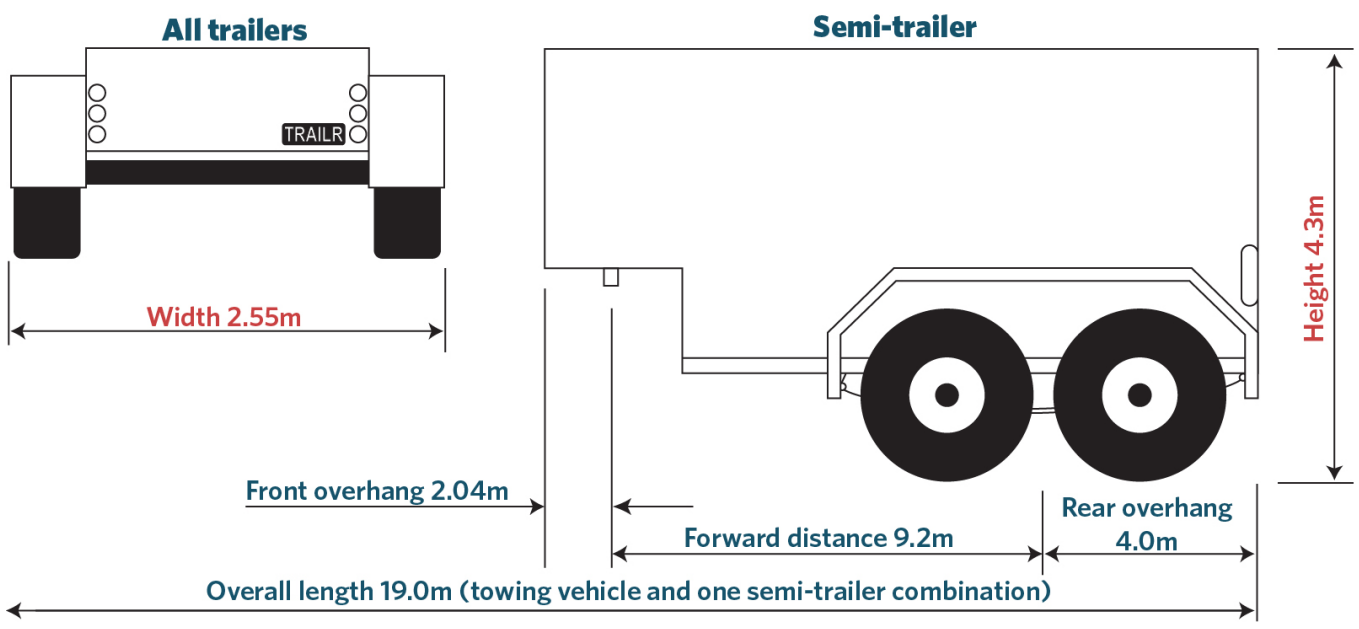
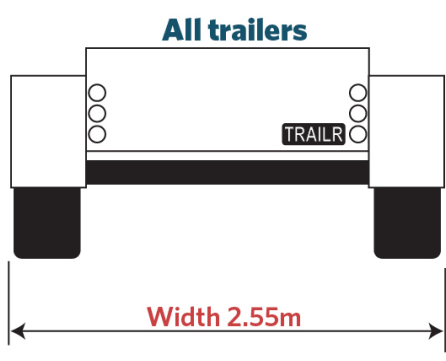
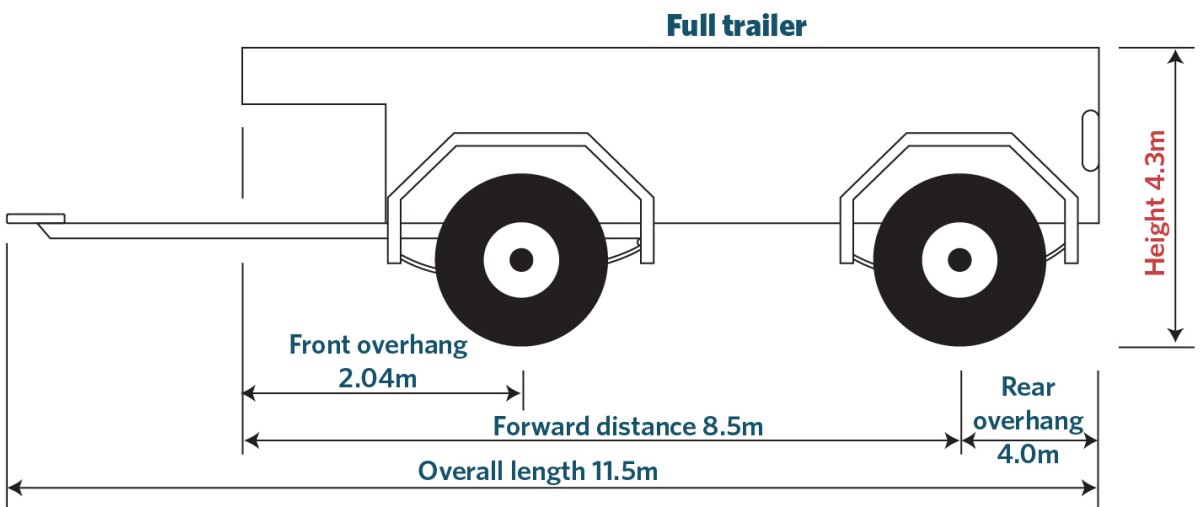
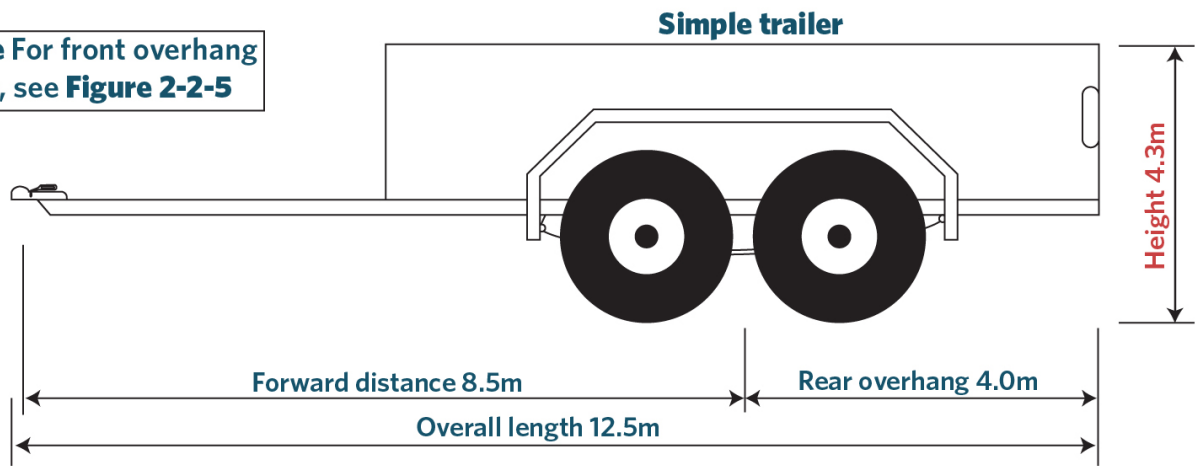
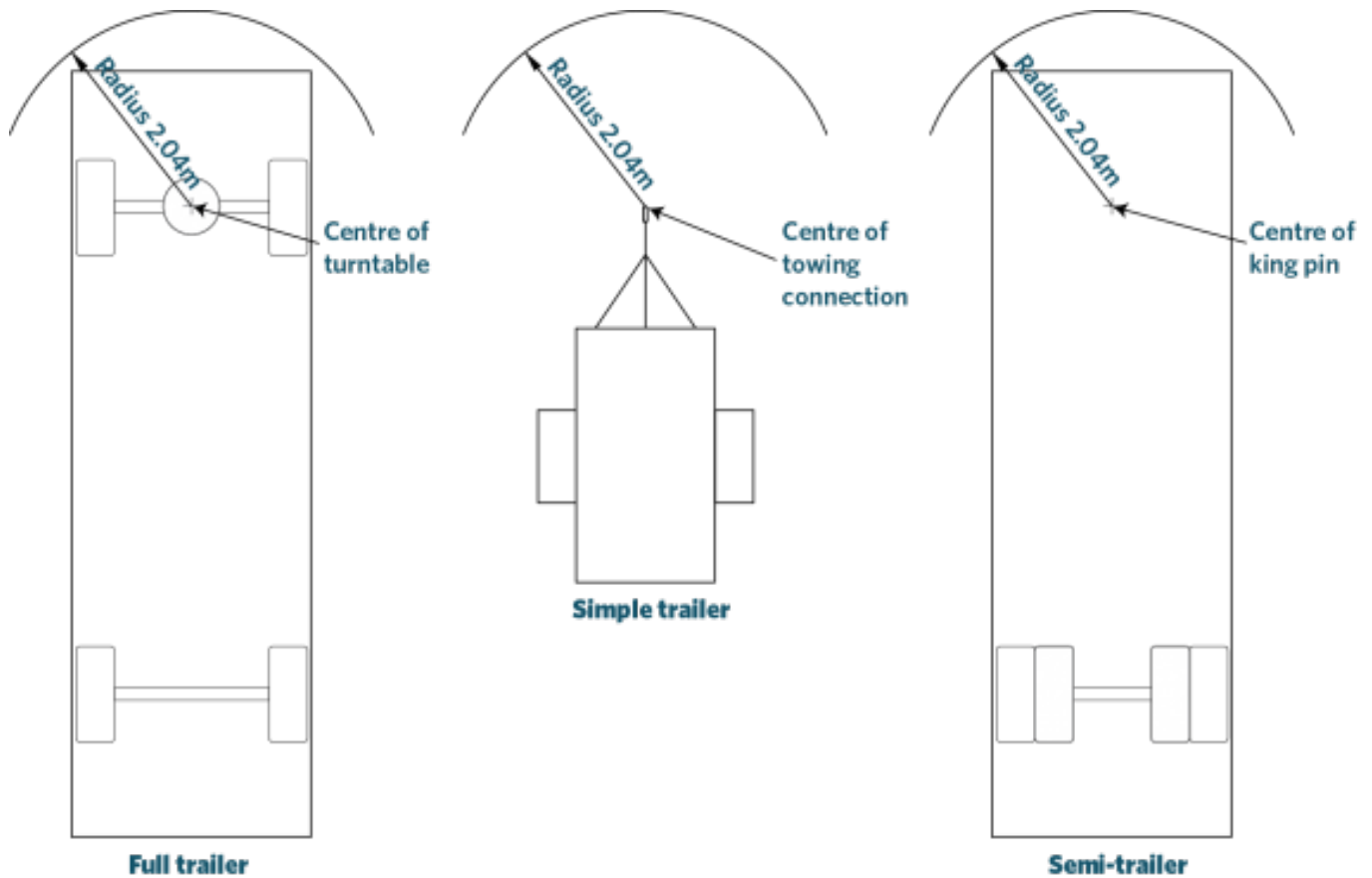


Figure 2-2-5. Measurement of front overhang



Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Dimensions and Mass 2016](#).

Mandatory equipment

1. A trailer with a GVM of 3500kg or less that exceeds the dimensions in Table 2-2-1 must meet the requirements in Table 2-2-2.

Page amended 1 June 2019 (see [amendment details](#)).

2-3 Glazing

Reasons for rejection

Glazing condition

1. Glazing is damaged (Note 1), has deteriorated or is modified (Note 2) so that its strength or mechanical performance is adversely affected.
2. Glazing is not securely affixed to the vehicle.
3. Glazing has a mirrored effect sufficient to dazzle other road users.

Note 2 Definitions

Modify means to change a vehicle from its original state by altering, substituting, adding or removing any structure, component or equipment, but does not include repair.

Repair means to restore a damaged or worn vehicle, its structure, systems, components or equipment to within safe tolerance of its condition when manufactured, including replacement with equivalent undamaged new structures, systems, components or equipment.

Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: Glazing, Windscreen Wipe and Wash, and Mirrors 1999.](#)

Permitted glazing

1. Trailers may be fitted with any type of glazing, including plastic glazing.

Glazing condition

2. Glazing must be mechanically sound, strong and securely affixed to the vehicle.
3. Glazing must not have a mirrored effect sufficient to dazzle other road users.