

Frequently Asked Questions

Coonawarra Grape Growers Association

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How is a trailer defined?

A trailer means any vehicle that is not self-propelled. This includes agricultural implements that are are towed by a motor vehicle, an agricultural machine or a tractor, or that are built to be towed.

If your agricultural implement does not carry a load, it is still defined as a trailer, but its registration requirements may vary from those of a load-carrying trailer. For example, where your general trailer has been constructed to carry a load, it is still classed as a trailer even if you have temporarily fitted it with equipment that you use in your business of primary production.

If you need further information on the registration requirements that you need to meet when you are towing various types of motor vehicles, you should refer to the booklet "The Guide - Don't Risk It, Register It" (Revised Edition).

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When should chains be used?

If your trailer or agricultural implement is not fitted with breakaway brakes, it must be connected to the towing vehicle by at least one chain, a cable or another flexible device. The vehicles must be connected so that:

- if the coupling breaks or accidentally detaches, your trailer will still be kept in tow; and
 - the coupling is allowed to move normally without any slack; and
 - the connection is built and fitted (if practicable) so that the drawbar does not hit the ground if the coupling accidentally detaches.
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What type of chain should be used?

It is your responsibility as the operator to ensure that the chain or cables you use are strong enough to meet the requirements outlined above.

Transport SA recommends that you seek advice from a qualified engineer regarding the suitability and capacity of the couplings you use.

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What are the approved hitches?

You are required to have:

- a coupling that is equipped with a positive locking mechanism; and
 - a positive locking mechanism can be released regardless of the angle of the trailer to the towing vehicle.
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Do portable toilets need to be registered?

You do not need to register a portable toilet as long as:

- it is being towed as a trailer with a conditionally registered tractor or a self-propelled agricultural machine; and
- the combination does not exceed 19 metres in length.

If you wish to tow the portable toilet with any other type of registered vehicle, then you must register it.

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Does a diesel fuel tank that is being towed need to be registered?

A fuel tank does not need to be registered if you are towing it with a:

- conditionally registered tractor; or
- conditionally registered self-propelled agricultural machine.

In any other case, you must register the fuel tank.

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What are the registration requirements for using ATVs, mules and gators?

You cannot fully register four-wheeled motorcycles, ATVs, Mules, Gators etc. as manufacturers have not sought or obtained Australian Design Rule compliance approval under the Federal *Motor Vehicles Standards Act 1989*. These vehicles are sold and intended for off road use only.

If you own and operate a 3 or 4 wheel motorcycle, you can be granted Special Purpose Vehicle Registration if:

- you are using it for agricultural purposes; and
- if you are a primary producer **and** owner under the Motor Vehicles Act **or** you are an appropriate State or Local Government body; and
- you use the vehicle only for purposes that are related to the operation of the agricultural property, or relevant government body, and the use is approved by the owner or caretaker of the land.

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Can I apply for an exemption for ATVs, mules and gators?

If you own and operate vehicles that are **not** 3 or 4 wheel motor bikes e.g. John Deere Gators, Kawasaki Mules, vehicles with 6 wheels, you will need to apply for an individual exemption. The eligibility requirements are the same as those for 3 or 4 wheel motorcycles.

You may be granted an individual exemption if:

- you run a private business and you are the owner and operator of the vehicle; and
- you are contracted to carry out the duties of a primary producer or with a State or Local Government body e.g. you are a caretaker of a Council owned caravan park, or you are a weed-spraying contractor employed by a council.

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Are there any other conditions that apply to this type of exemption?

Transport SA may issue you with an individual exemption to operate vehicles that are not 3 or 4 wheel motorcycles, subject to **all** of the following conditions:

Where the vehicle can travel:

- you cannot travel within the boundaries of a township or municipality;
- the vehicle is driven on the road only for work that is associated with or undertaken by your organisation;
- the headlamp is lit when you operate the vehicle on any public roads;

Vehicle operations:

- the vehicle can only be used by your employees;
- you must not tow a trailer with a laden mass that exceeds the unladen mass of the towing vehicle;

Equipment

- mudguards must be fitted to the front and rear wheels;
- you must fit and symmetrically position two rear vision mirrors equal distance from the longitudinal centreline so that you have a clear view to the rear of the vehicle;
- you fit the vehicle with a headlamp, rear lamp, stop lamp and rear reflector, a warning device and footrests for the driver;

Brakes

- the brakes that you fit must comply with the requirements of Section 128 of the *Road Traffic (Vehicle Standards) Rules 1999* and be fitted to two or more wheels of the vehicle;
- the actuating mechanism of the brake system must have a device that stops the accidental release of that mechanism and holds the brake in the applied position;

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Safety

- when the vehicle is being driven on roads, the driver and any passengers must wear approved safety helmets;
- you must not exceed a speed of 40 kilometres per hour unless you have fitted brakes to all road wheels;
- you must comply with all the requirements of the *South Australian Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act, 1986* that apply to the operation of your vehicle;

Documentation

- you must obtain Conditional Registration from Transport SA, under the requirements of Section 25 of the *Motor Vehicles Act, 1959*;
- you are required to carry a copy of the Certificate of Exemption and produce it when you are asked by a Police Officer or Transport SA Inspector.

Why do you need a permit if you have registered your vehicle?

There is no relationship between registering your vehicle and applying for an oversize and/or overmass operating permit. Permits and registration requirements are covered by different Acts.

When you register your motor vehicles, you are complying with the legal requirements of the Motor Vehicles Act. The Motor Vehicles Act covers the administration that relates to road use, e.g. types of registration, third party insurance, and driver licensing.

If you wish to operate an oversize and/or overmass vehicle on South Australian roads, a permit is an exemption that is issued to you under the Road Traffic Act. The Road Traffic Act covers all vehicle operating requirements and also details the maximum mass and loading limits of vehicles as well as vehicle standards, driving hours, road rules and miscellaneous regulations.

Can a permit that has been issued for a particular piece of self-propelled machinery, like a grape harvester, also cover its operations in another region?

If you hold a permit, you can only operate in the areas or zones that are specified on the permit. When you are operating subject to the permit, you must comply with all the permit conditions at all times.

If a permit can be issued to transport machinery on a truck, e.g. a harvester that is being used for a single journey, can a permit be issued for multiple journeys over a period of time?

Please refer to the question regarding the Vintage Period for further details.

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Can a permit be issued to cover the vintage period of three months?

Transport SA can issue you with two types of permits to cover vintage periods.

A Period Permit:

- can be issued to cover frequent trips of a particular vehicle that uses a specific route over a certain period of time;
- is usually issued for a minimum period of two months and for a maximum of 12 months.

A Zone Permit:

- can be issued to cover frequent trips that are made by a particular vehicle carrying the same load or type of load within a specified area e.g. the cartage of grapes in the Riverland;
- is generally issued for one zone only, but can be issued for one zone plus other zones that are immediately next to the original zone;
- is usually issued for 12 months but, subject to special conditions, can be arranged for longer periods;
- is only issued if all the routes within the zone are suitable for the proposed operation.

You are not automatically issued with a permit. An assessment of the mass and dimensions of your vehicle and/or load will need to be made by Transport SA.

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How many escort vehicles are required if three harvesters are travelling in a convoy?

You should not be travelling with three harvesters in a convoy.

Only **two** oversize vehicles of similar dimensions are permitted to travel in convoy, and this is only on routes with low traffic and good visibility. You can only travel in a convoy if police escorts are in attendance. You must restrict any convoy travel in urban areas to times when traffic density is very low.

If you do plan to be travel in a convoy:

- you must be accompanied by at least two police escorts; and
- to control the traffic, one escort must travel at the front and one at the rear; and
- you will also require two pilots, and in some situations, where you are carrying very large loads or if difficult manoeuvring is necessary, you may need additional police escorts.

To ensure the safety of all road users, you must make sure that any travel you undertake in a convoy is carefully managed.

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When do we need a pilot escort for vehicles?

A pilot vehicle is a 'mobile warning sign' you use to let other road users know that your oversize or overmass vehicle or load is approaching and using the road.

You do not need to use a pilot vehicle if your oversize agricultural vehicle crosses over Riddoch Highway directly from one paddock to another. Where your oversize agricultural vehicles travels along section of the Riddoch Highway, you may not need a pilot vehicle or vehicles, depending on:

- the width of your vehicle; and
- whether you have good visibility on the road for 500 metres ahead and/or behind your agricultural vehicle.

As an alternative to using pilot vehicles, you can use temporary roadside warning signs that show the words "Oversize Vehicle Ahead". You can only use roadside warning signs on minor roads for vehicles that are less than 7.5m wide and if the distance you are travelling is not more than 5km.

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Can a tractor be used as a pilot vehicle?

You can use your tractor as a pilot vehicle. This exemption is only granted:

- on an individual assessment basis; and
- for grape harvesters travelling at night under a permit; and
- if the tractor trailer combination forms part of the harvesting process; and
- provided that the tractor trailer combination that is used as pilot vehicle meets statutory dimensions; and
- provided that suitable signs and warning lights are displayed.

If you are operating under this exemption, the tractor that you are using as a pilot vehicle must meet the requirements in the booklet "Escorting Guidelines for Oversize and Overmass Vehicles and Loads".

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What implements can be towed behind registered primary producers' utilities?

If you have registered your trailer in accordance with the *Motor Vehicles Act, 1959* it can be towed behind a primary producer utility, provided:

- your utility is also registered; and
- both the trailer and the utility comply with the towing and braking requirements specified in the Road Traffic Act and Regulations.

For further information on the registration requirements that you need to comply with when you are towing various types of motor vehicles, you should refer to the booklet "The Guide – Don't Risk It, Register It" (Revised Edition).

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When do grape harvesting operators need a Medium Rigid Vehicle licence?

If your vehicle does not exceed 4.5 tonnes unladen mass, then a Class C licence is appropriate for your operation.

If the unladen mass of your grape harvester is over 4.5 tonnes, but does not exceed 8 tonnes, then the driver must hold a Class LR licence.

Where your vehicle exceeds an unladen mass of 8 tonnes, then the driver must hold a Class MR licence.

Drivers can obtain both a Class LR and a MR licence to drive agricultural machinery by lodging an application at a Customer Service Centre. In both cases, a replacement licence will be issued at a cost of a Level 2 Administrative fee.

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Where can I go for further information?

A Transport SA Customer Service Centre will be able to help you with any requests for information. You can also visit the Transport SA website at:

www.roads.sa.gov.au/whatever

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