

FAQs on Loading/Load Security

What are the general laws on securing a load / load security? Vehicle operators/consignors are obliged under health & safety legislation to identify transport hazards that exist in the workplace and to take the appropriate steps to eliminate or reduce any risks found. They also have a responsibility to ensure a vehicle is not overloaded and that their related work practices do not result in a danger to their employees or other workers. For more information on this please visit www.loadsafe.ie where you will find various booklets and guidance on load security. Alternatively, you can contact the HSA on (01) 614 7000 or email your specific query to loadsafe@hsa.ie.

Where can I find a training course for Securing Loads? Please contact the Health & Safety Authority on (01) 614 7000 or email: loadsafe@hsa.ie.

What are the road safety laws on transporting a load?

The general road traffic rules for transporting a load are as follows:

- Every load carried by a vehicle in a public place shall be of such a weight and size and so distributed, packed, adjusted and attached to the vehicle that, so far as can reasonably be foreseen, no danger is liable to be caused and that there is no interference with the stability of vehicle.
- In the case of mechanically propelled vehicles and trailers, no load carried shall exceed a reasonable weight, having regard to the engine capacity, brakes, tyres and general construction of the vehicle.
- A load shall not be carried on a vehicle on a public road in such a manner that part of the load is liable to fall on the road, or drags on the surface of the road, so as to cause damage to the road or to be liable to cause danger.

What are the penalties for overloading a vehicle? It is an offence to carry a load on a vehicle which is overloaded. The RSA has been advised by An Garda Síochána that in practice the *driver* of an overweight vehicle will receive penalty points and a fixed charge, while the *owner* of the vehicle will receive a summons to court for the offence. On conviction, the courts can then impose on the owner of the vehicle a class C fine (up to €2,500), a prison sentence or both. Where convicted, the vehicle owner may also have further penalties payable to the appropriate Local Authority.

What if the vehicle was (over)loaded by a 3rd party i.e. not the owner/driver? In cases where a vehicle is found at a roadside inspection to be overweight, and the vehicle was loaded by a 3rd party (not being the vehicle owner / driver), the Gardaí may inform the Health and Safety Authority (HSA). The HSA have the powers to inspect a workplace for failures in work practices that would eliminate or reduce any transport hazard risks (such as vehicle loading). If significant deficiencies are found in these work practices it can ultimately result in a prosecution for the consignor.

Where can I find the maximum legal weight, height or length limits for my vehicle / combination of vehicles?

Please refer to our [Weights and Dimensions Leaflet](#) which outlines all of the maximum legal weight, height and length limits for various vehicle combinations.

What if my vehicle can carry heavier weights/loads than those permitted under Irish Law? In situations where you want to carry heavier loads than those permitted by law, and your vehicle is capable of doing so, you can apply for an abnormal loads permit. Please view our separate [FAQ on Abnormal or Indivisible Loads](#) for more information on this.

Is it legal to carrying luggage on your vehicle's roof rack? Yes, provided the roof rack/box is compatible with the vehicle, and that any load fitted is securely attached, with no possibility of falling off. You should also ensure that you do not exceed the design capacity of the roof rack, or the design gross weight of the vehicle, as set out by the manufacturer.

My load can't be divided (indivisible). Do I need a special permit? Yes you will need an [abnormal loads permit](#).

Are there regulations regarding carrying ladders on the roof of vans? Anything that projects out further than the outermost part of the front of the vehicle could be interpreted as an inessential projection which is illegal and comes under [Road Traffic Regulations S.I. 5 of 2003](#) as amended.