

Vehicle Standards FAQs

The Vehicle Standards and Enforcement Section of the Road Safety Authority deals with standards for vehicles in use on our roads and standards that must be met before a vehicle enters into service on our roads. We also deal with the testing of both private and commercial vehicles and enforcement of legislation on Tachographs, EU drivers' hours' rules, Road Transport Working Time Directive and the licensing of road haulage and passenger operators to engage in hire and reward operations

The following FAQs represent some of the most common queries we receive. The information set out in the FAQs is intended as a general guide only and does not purport to be a legal or exhaustive interpretation of the requirements or position in relation to the subject matter in each case. These FAQs will be updated on a continuous basis to reflect the most up to date position in each case. Where reference is made to a Statutory Instrument (S.I.) or Road Traffic Act, these can be accessed at www.irishstatutebook.ie

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<http://www.rsa.ie/Home/upload/File/Veh%20Stds/CommercialVehicleTesting%20FAQ.pdf>

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Q. Axle - Steering Axle Tyres - Can I fit super singles to the steering axle(s) of my HGV?

A. Yes.

Q. Axle Weight - Can I reduce the axle weights on my trailer?

A. Yes. Take the trailer to an authorised Weights & Dimensions installer and have the vehicle officially re-plated.

Q. Axle Weights - Can I reduce the axle weights on my goods vehicle?

A. Yes, depending on the use of the vehicle. In the test centre the brakes will still be tested against the DGWV.

Q. Axle - Driving Axle Tyres - Can I fit super singles to my driving axle?

A. Yes. Provided they have the correct load index. Where super singles are fitted, weight restrictions will apply. These are set out in Regulation 3 of S.I. No. 5 of 2003. Before fitting super singles to a vehicle, you should contact the vehicle manufacturer regarding the suitability of the vehicle. Evidence of this check with the manufacturer should be sought and retained by the vehicle owner/operator, as it may subsequently be requested by enforcement or testing officers.

Q. Brakes – what are the requirements for brakes on vehicles and trailers?

A. All vehicles operating on Irish roads must comply with the Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles) Regulations, 1963 (S.I. 190 of 1963). Any trailer over 750kgs gross vehicle weight must have a braking system. In the case of cars, the design gross vehicle weight of the trailer must not exceed half the weight of the drawing vehicle. In the case of a four wheel drive vehicle, the design gross vehicle weight of the trailer must not exceed one and a half times the weight of the drawing vehicle. In any case, the design gross vehicle weight of the trailer must not exceed the towing capacity recommended by the vehicle manufacturer.

In the case of trailers subject to an annual roadworthiness test, the performance of brakes is tested during the test.

Q. Camper Vans & Motor Homes – Do I have to test my camper van/motor home?

All vehicles used in a public place are subject to roadworthiness testing under EU Directive 2009/40/EC. This directive has been transposed into Irish Law and the Gardai are enforcing these regulations.

Owners of motor caravans should ensure that their vehicles are tested. The Vehicle Testing Network (VTN) can accommodate testing and contact/location details can be found on our web site at www.rsa.ie.

The RSA plans to conduct a review, in the near future, of the roadworthiness testing requirements for motor caravans which includes test criteria, vehicle categorisation and frequency. The review will include a public consultation process.

Q. Certificate of Conformity – What is it and when is it required?

A. A Certificate of Conformity is issued by the manufacturer of a vehicle and contains technical information concerning a vehicle e.g. Type Approval Numbers, Engine Size etc. A Certificate of Conformity is issued by the manufacturer to accompany each vehicle which has been manufactured identical to a type that has been type approved. "Type Approval" is a term used to describe the regulatory system applied to all new motor vehicles before they are brought into use in the EU. The system is designed to ensure that all such vehicles meet certain specified technical standards including safety, noise and exhaust emissions. A Certificate of Conformity can only be issued by the manufacturer of the vehicle or his authorised agent (franchised distributor).

Vehicles previously registered using temporary export plates require a Certificate of Conformity if the vehicle is to be registered in the State.

Q. Certificate of Roadworthiness for goods vehicles – Do they have to be displayed?

A. No, drivers are not obliged by law to display or carry the CRW with them. They are usually given 10 days to produce it at their local Garda Station. It is advisable that drivers carry either the original CRW or a copy in the vehicle if at all possible as if stopped at a checkpoint they will be required to produce it.

Q. Certificate of Roadworthiness - Are they required for Agricultural Tractors?

A. To date all agricultural vehicles have been exempt from Roadworthiness testing. However this exemption is currently under review in light of the modern use of an Agricultural Tractor in Ireland and the increased size and speed of these vehicles. Roadworthiness testing of Agricultural Tractors would, in the opinion of the RSA, promote greater road safety for all road users.

The legislation concerning Roadworthiness testing is contained in S.I. 771 of 2004, European Communities (Vehicle Testing) Regulations. This requires that goods vehicles and goods trailers are subjected to an annual Roadworthiness test. These regulations currently exclude agricultural tractors and agricultural trailers (S.I. No. 771 of 2004 defines a goods trailer as "a trailer, including a semi-trailer, constructed or adapted primarily for the conveyance of goods or burden of any description having a design gross weight exceeding 3,500 kilograms and does not form part of a combination of vehicles which exceeds 44,000 kilograms gross weight, but excluding an agricultural trailer".

All vehicles must comply with Construction, Equipment and Use Regulations and Lighting Regulations.

The review on the Use of Agricultural and Works Vehicles on Public Roads will inform any future policy in this area and the outcome of the review will be made known publically in due course.

Q. Child Restraints –What are the regulations for these in vehicles?

A. Information on child restraint systems can be downloaded at the following link:

http://www.rsa.ie/childsafetyincars/procontent/Home/Home_Page/index.html

Q. Commercial Vehicle Testing - http://www.rsa.ie/SERVICES/RSA_Services/Vehicle_Testing.html

Q. Defective Vehicle – Is it illegal to sell a defective vehicle?

A. Yes. Part II (8) of the Road Traffic Act, 1968 sets out the provisions with regard to sale and supply of vehicles.

It is also illegal to sell a vehicle to a person under the age of 17 (except in a case where the vehicle can be driven legally by a person of 16 years of age). Part 4 (Section 30) of the Road Traffic Act, 2004 sets out the provisions relating to the sale of a vehicle to a minor.

Q. European Communities Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA) – what do I need to know?

A. A list of Frequently Asked Questions can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.rsa.ie/SERVICES/upload/File/ECWVTA/Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%20post%20April%209%202009.pdf>

Q. Exhaust - Can I fit a modified exhaust to my car?

A. Fitting of modified exhaust systems to passenger cars is governed under the Road Traffic (Components and Separate Technical Units) Regulations 2007. Where a component or separate technical unit is being purchased or fitted to a vehicle or trailer, such component or separate technical unit shall, if so required by a separate Directive at time of fitment to such vehicle, conform to a type which has been type-approved, bear any relevant type-approval mark and be fitted in accordance with the requirements of such separate Directive.

“Replacement Silencing Systems” for passenger cars must conform to the standards laid out in UNECE Regulation 59. When the vehicle is in motion the noise emitted must not exceed the limit applicable to the category of vehicle concerned at the time when the type to which the vehicle belongs was originally approved. Furthermore it must not exceed by more than 3 dB(A) the noise level indicated in the approval of the type to which the vehicle belongs. The noise level when the vehicle is stationary must not exceed by more than 3dB(A) the reference value indicated in the approval of the type of which the vehicle belongs.

For vehicles currently in use on Irish Roads, the Construction Equipment & Use Regulations (S.I. 190 of 1963) do not present specific values for the sound levels emitted from specific categories of vehicles, however they do in fact clearly state that vehicles must be fitted with “an exhaust silencer or other device suitable and sufficient for reducing to a reasonable level the noise caused by the escape of exhaust gases from the engine”.

A full list of the permissible sound levels for moving vehicles is stated in the type approval requirements for different vehicle categories and the RSA are currently exploring the possibility of introducing an “exhaust noise” test for cars tested at NCT.

Q. Gross Vehicle Weight - Can I or the dealer down plate the GVW of my vehicle?

A. No, the only weights accepted for plating are those given at the factory by the manufacturer.

Q. Indicator Lights – What is the legal colour?

A. As per SI 189 of 1963 indicator lights must be amber in colour.

Q. Lights - Can I fit blue, red or green lights to the front of my vehicle?

A. In general the law requires that only white or yellow lights be shown to the front (apart from indicators), with the exception of emergency vehicles. Blue lights can be shown from the front of vehicles being used –

- (i) by a member of the Garda Síochána in the performance of his or her duties as such member,
- (ii) as a fire brigade vehicle,
- (iii) by persons providing an ambulance service,
- (iv) by the Irish Prison Service,
- (v) as an Irish Marine Emergency Service vehicle, with or without a trailer,
- (vi) for the delivery or collection of human transplant organs, human blood or human blood products.

Amber lights can be shown from the front of vehicles being used –

- (i) as a breakdown vehicle,
- (ii) as a road clearance vehicle,
- (iii) as a road works vehicle,
- (iv) by a local authority (within the meaning of the Local Government Act 2001 (No. 37 of 2001) or other person authorised by a local authority in the collection and disposal of refuse,
- (v) in the provision or maintenance of telephone services or of gas or electricity supply, or
- (vi) as a Customs and Excise patrol vehicle.

The power of the lamp where the colour of the light is –

blue, shall not exceed 50 watts, and
amber, shall not exceed 36 watts.

Q. Mini-bus registration - Can I register my mini-bus as an ambulance?

A. Yes, if it is used **only** for the transportation of patients and no other use.

Q. Mobile Machines – Are they exempt from vehicle testing?

A. All vehicles within the “Mobile Machine” Tax Class with the exception of Forklifts, Loading Shovels and Telescopic Handlers are required to undergo an annual Roadworthiness test.

The European Communities Vehicle Testing Regulations 2004, (S.I. No. 771 of 2004) sets out the categories of vehicles which must undergo an annual roadworthiness test. A goods vehicle is defined in the regulations as

“a mechanically propelled vehicle, or an articulated vehicle, constructed or adapted primarily for the conveyance of goods or burden of any description whether or not the vehicle is used for such a purpose”.

In this case vehicles in the Mobile Machine Tax Class, with the exception of Forklifts, Loading Shovels and Telescopic Handlers must be tested as these vehicles (i.e. Forklifts, Loading Shovels & Telescopic Handlers) are primarily designed for use off road.

Q. Permit - Do I need a permit to transport goods, the transport of which makes my vehicle an oversized and/or overweight?

A. A permit is required for all vehicles outside the legal limits. Please see Leaflet no 1 on the RSA website (Guidelines on Maximum Weight and Dimensions of Mechanically Propelled Vehicles and Trailers) for further information.

A new streamlined system for issuing special permits for the movement of long wide loads will be introduced from the 4th May. Any operator who wishes to transport a vehicle or load which falls outside of the limits allowed by the Road Traffic (Construction Equipment & Use) Regulations 2003, S.I. 5 of 2003 must apply for a permit to the Local Authority through whose functional area the loads are moved. The new system will be operated by An Garda Síochána and it will apply to: designated routes along major inter urban routes which are specified in SI No 147 of 2009 for the movement of wide and long vehicles (including loads) not exceeding 27.4 metres in length and 4.3 metres in width on the major interurban routes and to Cork, Ringaskiddy and Rosslare ports.

For vehicles operating on other routes exceeding the limits specified above and whose weights are outside the limits specified in S.I. No. 5 of 2003, the existing permit system remains in force and operators should continue to apply to the designated Local Authorities for permits to move long wide and heavy loads.

The introduction of this scheme will fulfil Action 125 of the Road Safety Strategy.

The Permit Application Form, Schedule of Designated Roads and Guidelines for Operators may be found at: <http://www.garda.ie/Controller> <http://www.garda.ie/Controller.aspx?Page=105>.

Q. Public Service Vehicle - Who is my local Garda PSV inspector?

A. Contact your local Garda Station for details of your PSV inspector.

Q. Quads/ Motorcycles – What do I need to register?

A. All motorcycles (including quads, tricycles and mopeds) presented for registration into Ireland must comply with European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval and a [Certificate of Conformity](#) to 2002/24/EC will be required when applying for registration.

Q. Quads/ ATV's – What is the legislation regarding the use of these vehicles?

A. Electric and petrol-powered scooters, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and mini-motorcycles and all such-like vehicles are regarded as mechanically propelled vehicles within the meaning of the Road Traffic Act 1961. All mechanically propelled vehicles must comply with Road Traffic law relating to the construction, equipment and use of vehicles; i.e. they must meet all requirements covering brakes, lights, dimensions, weight springs, wheels, tyres, steering, gears, mudguards, view of the road, mirrors, safety glass, windscreen wipers mirrors

speedometers, horn, silencer, exhausts emissions, condition and maintenance. In addition a mechanically propelled vehicle may not be used in any public place unless the use is covered by third party insurance for personal injury and property damage. The driver of a motor cycle (including scooters) and a passenger carried on the motor are required to each wear a crash helmet while the motor cycle is used in a public place.

Electrically assisted cycles, known as “Pedelecs”, which have electric motors which only assist the pedalling effort and which do not or cannot act as a means of propulsion in their own right, are not considered to be mechanically propelled vehicles.

Q. Regulations – What regulations must my vehicle meet when used on a public road/in a public place?

All mechanically propelled vehicles must comply with Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 1963 to 2006 relating to the construction, equipment and use of vehicles; i.e. they must meet all requirements covering, among other things, brakes, lights, dimensions, weight, wheels, tyres, steering, gears, mudguards, view of the road, mirrors, safety glass, windscreen wipers mirrors speedometers, horn, silencer, exhaust emissions, condition and maintenance. In addition, a mechanically propelled vehicle may not be used in any public place unless the use is covered by third party insurance for personal injury and property damage. The main regulations in this regard are outlined below:

- **S.I. No. 190 of 1963**
ROAD TRAFFIC (CONSTRUCTION, EQUIPMENT AND USE OF VEHICLES) REGULATIONS, 1963
- **S.I. No. 189 of 1963**
ROAD TRAFFIC (LIGHTING OF VEHICLES) REGULATIONS, 1963
- **S.I. No. 5 of 2003**
ROAD TRAFFIC (CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF VEHICLES) REGULATIONS, 2003

Q. Re-Registration of a vehicle – Can I re-register a private-use passenger vehicle as a commercial vehicle or a commercial vehicle as a private-use vehicle?

A. You must contact the Revenue Commissioners in relation to the re-registration of any vehicle. The Revenue Commissioners will need to know what modifications to the vehicle you intend to or have carried out and may ask for proof of the standard of such work. The Revenue Commissioners may stipulate that certain modifications are carried out to ensure that the vehicle complies with their requirements for such a change in the registration details. Further information regarding the registration of vehicles can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.revenue.ie/en/about/foi/s16/vehicle-registration-tax/vrt-manual-section-1.pdf>

Q. Safety Belts in HGVs – Are safety belts required in HGVs?

A. New HGVs/buses manufactured in a series of more than 500 units are required to have safety belts from 20th Oct 2007. This would mean that all passenger seats in new vehicles now require belts from 20th October 2007 (see S.I. 448 of 2007, European Communities (Mechanically Propelled Vehicle Entry into Service) Regulations, 2007). HGVs and buses registered before that do not need belts.

The Regulations which deal with this are the European Communities (Compulsory Use of Safety Belts and Child Restraint Systems in Motor Vehicles) Regulations 2006 (S.I. 240 of 2006). These Regulations came into force on 5th May 2006.

Among other things, these Regulations extend the requirement to wear a safety belt or child restraint to the occupants of seats fitted with safety belts in heavy goods vehicles (i.e. vehicles with a design gross vehicle weight exceeding 3500kg).

Q. Safety Belts on Agricultural Vehicles – Are safety belts required?

A. Currently there is no legal requirement to fit seat belts to agricultural vehicles. However, S.I. 240 of 2006 requires that, where safety belts are fitted, they must be worn. If safety belts are fitted to an Agricultural Vehicle then they must comply with the requirements of Directive 2003/37/EC on the type approval of Agricultural Vehicles.

Q. Safety Belt wearing in all vehicles – Are safety belts always required to be worn by all drivers and passengers?

A. Where safety belts are fitted to a vehicle, they must be worn by all drivers and passengers, with the following exceptions:

- a person wearing a disabled person's belt
- the holder of a certificate of a registered medical practitioner
- a person giving instruction in or in respect of the driving of a vehicle
- a person conducting a test of competence to drive under Part III of the Act
- a member of An Garda Síochána or of the Defence Forces acting in the course of his or her duties

Q. Safety Belts – Where are they required?

A. In general, safety belts are required in all vehicles up to 3,500kgs gross vehicle weight (GVW). Safety belts have been compulsory on new buses and trucks manufactured in a series of more than 500 units since 20th October 2007. Where safety belts are fitted to any vehicle, they must be worn.

Q. Safety Belts requirements on camper vans?

A. Camper vans are "special purpose vehicles" and as such, they are not deemed to be similar to cars for the purposes of passenger accommodation. The seats in the back may or may not be designed as seating accommodation for a mechanically propelled vehicle. The manufacturer makes a vehicle with a certain number of seats and should then declare that the vehicle "can carry x number of passengers seated in the following positions". Additional seating may be provided for when the vehicle is at rest. Such additional seating may not be suitable for use when the vehicle is on the road. The only way to be sure is to check the owner's handbook (or check directly with the manufacturer). The difference between passenger accommodation and additional seating comes down to the designer's intention.

Q. Safety Belts - Are safety belts required on vintage cars?

A. Safety belts are not mandatory on vehicles registered before the 1st June, 1971. For vehicles registered on or after the 1st day of June, 1971, a lap and diagonal type safety belt must be provided for the driver and front outer passenger. For vehicles registered on or after the 1st day of January 1992, all outer forward facing seats are provided with a lap and diagonal type safety belt and all other forward facing seats are provided with a lap and diagonal or lap type safety belt. Where safety belts are fitted to any vehicle, they must be worn.

Q. Safety Belts on Buses – Are all buses required to have safety belts fitted?

A. Safety belts are required on new buses manufactured in a series of more than 500 units since 20th October 2007. Buses which are designed for both urban use and standing passengers are excepted from this requirement. There is no requirement to have safety belts fitted in buses manufactured prior to October 2007 other than in minibuses. S.I. No. 359 of 1991 extended the long standing requirements for safety belts in the front seats of small passenger vehicles and light goods vehicles to new minibuses first registered on or after 1st January 1992 with more than 8 seats and a design laden weight not exceeding 3.5t.

In relation to safety belts on school buses, these are required only if the bus is operating in a school transport scheme operated by Bus Éireann. This was introduced by Bus Éireann as a contract requirement.

Q. Safety Belt Wearing on Buses – Driver & Passenger Obligations?

A. S.I. No. 240 of 2006 sets out driver and passenger obligations in relation to safety belts in vehicles. It also includes penalties for failure to comply. Essentially, every adult and every child of three years of age or more in a vehicle fitted with safety belts is obliged to wear a safety belt. In the case of a bus fitted with safety belts, each person on the bus is responsible for wearing his or her seat belt.

The Regulations also provide that bus drivers are not obliged to carry a passenger who fails to wear a safety belt when one has been provided. The owner of the bus is required to ensure that passengers are informed of the requirement to wear safety belts while they are seated and while the vehicle is in motion through either an announcement made by the driver or conductor, an audio visual presentation, or appropriate signage/pictograms affixed to each seating position etc. There are penalties for failure to comply with this requirement.

The vast majority of buses on Irish roads are fitted with safety belts. Since 2007, all buses built in a series of more than 500 which are being registered in Ireland must have safety belts. This requirement will apply to all buses within the next couple of years.

Q. Securing of Loads – What is the correct procedure?

A. Article 96 (1) of the Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles) Regulations, 1963 (S.I. No. 190 of 1963) requires that every vehicle being used in a public place shall be such, and so maintained and used, that no danger is likely to be caused to any person. In addition, the Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles) Regulations, 1963 (S.I. No. 190 of 1963) require that a load carried by a vehicle in a public place shall be of such size and weight and securely attached to the vehicle so that no danger is liable to be caused. The relevant article states: - "96. (3) (a) 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. (b) 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. "Also, a load must not be carried in such a manner that part of the load is liable to fall or drag on the surface of the road: - "96. (4) 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."

The RSA booklet "Bus and Truck Operators - Guide to Managing for Road Safety" contains some useful information in relation to the securing of loads:

<http://www.rsa.ie/SERVICES/upload/File/Enforcement/Safe%20Operators%20Guide.pdf>

Q. Securing Loads – Is it the operator’s responsibility to provide suitable restraints to secure the load?

A. The selection of the best means of securing a load to a vehicle will depend on the type and composition of the load to be carried. Operators should equip themselves with the correct securing equipment for the types of load carried and where general cargoes are carried various types should be available. Clamps, special bolts, steel wire ropes, chains, webbing harnesses, sheets, nets, ropes and shoring bars are all suitable devices for use in load restraint but it is essential to ensure that they are strong enough for the weight of loads carried.

Q. Speed limiters - Does my vehicle need a speed limiter / what are the exemptions?

A. As per SI 831 of 2005, all Heavy Commercial Vehicles above 12,000 kg DGWV and all Passenger Vehicles above 10,000 kg DGWV registered after 1st January 1988 require a speed limiter. Also all other Heavy Commercial Vehicles and all other Passenger Vehicles registered since 1st October 2001 require a speed limiter with the following exemptions; Army, Gardaí, Fire Brigade or other Emergency vehicles and any Heavy Commercial Vehicle below 12,000kgs and Passenger Vehicles below 10,000kgs registered between 1st October 2001 and 1st January 2005 that do not have diesel engines.

NOTE; Light Commercial Goods Vehicles (below 3,500 DGWV) do not require a speed limiter and the definition for Passenger vehicles in this regulation is "a vehicle having seating accommodation for more than 8 persons exclusive of the driver".

Q. Speed Limiter - My speed limiter is only set at 85km/h – Is this ok?

A. It can be set at speeds up to 90km/h for goods vehicles and 100km/h for a bus. See S.I. 831 of 2005 for further information

The maximum speed limits in Ireland are:

| Vehicle | Vehicle Speed Limit |
|--|--|
| A vehicle that can carry more than 8 passengers, apart from the driver, but does not carry any standing passengers | 80 kilometres an hour (80km/h) (100km/h on a motorway) |
| A goods vehicle with a design gross vehicle weight of more than 3,500 kilograms | 80 kilometres an hour (80km/h) |
| Any vehicle towing a trailer, caravan, horsebox or other attachment | 80 kilometres an hour (80km/h) |
| Any double-deck bus or double-deck coach | 65 kilometres an hour (65km/h) |
| A single deck bus carrying standing passengers | 65 kilometres an hour (65km/h) |

Q. Steering (Left Hand Drive) – Are cars with left hand drive steering legal to drive in Ireland?

A. Yes, for further information please refer to S.I. 190 of 1963, Article 20 (Steering). Left hand drive steering (other than Public Service Vehicles) is not exempt from these regulations.

Headlights should always be properly focussed for use on the left hand side of the road. In the case of a vehicle that has its headlights set up for use on the right hand side of the road, adjustments will be necessary to ensure that the lights are correctly focussed for use on the left hand side of the road.

Q. Taxi - Who is responsible for the regulation of Taxis?

A. The Commission for Taxi Regulation is responsible for the regulation of Taxis and can be contacted about taxi, hackney and limousine services in Ireland.

Contact details: 35 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin 2.

Phone: 1890 60 60 90. Fax: 01 659 3801 or email: commission@taxiregulator.ie

Q. Towing a trailer - Can I tow a trailer with my car?

A. An ordinary category B licence allows a person to drive a vehicle up to 3,500kg (3.5 tonnes) Design Gross Vehicle Weight (DGVM)¹ towing a trailer that weighs up to 750kg (0.75 tonnes) DGVM. This gives a maximum combination weight of up to 4,250kg (4.25 tonnes).

Drivers that hold a category B licence are entitled to tow a trailer exceeding 750kg (0.75 tonnes) Design Gross Vehicle Weight (DGVM) provided that the DGVM of the trailer does not exceed the unladen weight (ULW)² of the towing vehicle, and the maximum combination weight does not exceed a total of 3,500kg (3.5 tonnes).

If you want to pull a heavier trailer you will need a Category EB licence.

Furthermore, the Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment And Use Of Vehicles) Regulations, 1963, (S.I. 190 of 1963 as amended) states that trailers with a laden weight exceeding (750kg) or half the weight laden of any drawing vehicle to which it is attached (whichever is the less) while used in a public place, shall be provided with;

- A parking brake (fulfilling requirements of these Regulations)
- A continuous or semi-continuous braking device (fulfilling requirements of these Regulations)
- A device capable of automatically stopping the trailer if it becomes detached while in motion

1. "design gross vehicle weight" (DGVM) means the gross weight of a vehicle laden with the heaviest load which it can reasonably carry having regard to the engine, brakes, tyres and general construction of such vehicle and shall, until the contrary is shown, be taken to be its design gross weight as specified by its manufacturer or, where the design gross weight as specified by the manufacturer is not ascertainable, the design gross weight as specified by an automotive engineer;

2 “unladen weight” (ULW) means the vehicles own weight when not carrying any goods or burden. This is inclusive of the body and all parts which are necessary to or ordinarily used with the vehicle or trailer when working on a road and exclusive of fuel and, in the case of an electrically powered vehicle, the batteries.

Q. Trailer registration - Can I register/licence my trailers from another country in Ireland (all trailers over 3.5t gross vehicle weight must be registered)?

A. Yes, once you have an Irish address. You should contact your local Motor Taxation Office/Local Authority for further information.

Q. Tyres - Can I fit bigger or wider tyres on my car?

A. Consult with the manufacturer’s recommendations/guidelines for details regarding the tyres that may be fitted to your car.

Q. Vehicle Legislation – Who are the enforcers of vehicle legislation?

A. An Garda Síochána is the responsible body.

Contact details: Garda Headquarters, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8

Phone: 01 666 1792/1954 <http://www.garda.ie/>

Q. Wheels - Can I fit wider wheels to my car?

A. No, non-standard parts are illegal. Wheels that extend beyond the line of the vehicle will result in failure of the NCT.