



STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS.

**S.I. No. 253 of 2014**

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ROAD TRAFFIC (CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF VEHICLES)  
(AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) REGULATIONS 2014  
(WEIGHTS AND COUPLING)

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ROAD TRAFFIC (CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF VEHICLES)  
(AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) REGULATIONS 2014  
(WEIGHTS AND COUPLING)

I, LEO VARADKAR, Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, in exercise of the powers conferred on me by sections 11, 12 and 13 of the Road Traffic Act 1961 (No. 24 of 1961) and the National Roads and Road Traffic (Transfer of Departmental Administration and Ministerial Functions) Order 2002 (S.I. No. 298 of 2002) (as adapted by the Transport (Alteration of Name of Department and Title of Minister) Order 2011 (S.I. No. 141 of 2011)) hereby make the following regulations:

Part 1

PRELIMINARY AND GENERAL

*Citation.*

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2014.

*Commencement.*

2. These Regulations come into operation on 1 January 2016.

*Interpretation.*

3. In these Regulations, “Regulations of 2003” means the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 5 of 2003).

Part 2

AMENDMENT OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC (CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF VEHICLES)  
REGULATIONS 2003

*Amendment of Regulation 2 of the Regulations of 2003.*

4. Regulation 2 of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by:

(a) the deletion in Regulation 2(1) of the definitions of “agricultural trailer”, “articulated vehicle”, “design gross vehicle weight”, “land implement”, “land tractor”, “land trailer”, “track-laying” and “trailer”;

(b) the insertion in Regulation 2(1) of the following definitions:

“agricultural tractor”:

*Notice of the making of this Statutory Instrument was published in  
“Iris Oifigiúil” of 13th June, 2014.*

- (a) means a tractor the main function of which lies in its tractive power and which:
- (i) has at least two axles,
  - (ii) has a maximum design speed of not less than 6 kilometres per hour,
  - (iii) has been designed especially to pull, push, carry and actuate certain interchangeable equipment,
  - (iv) has been designed for and is used in the performance of agricultural, fisheries, forestry or horticultural work, or to draw agricultural trailers or equipment, and
- (b) includes a tractor as is described in paragraph (a) that:
- (i) has been adapted to carry a load in the context of agricultural, fisheries, forestry or horticultural work, or
  - (ii) is equipped with one or more passenger seats;

‘agricultural trailer’:

- (a) means a trailer intended mainly to be drawn by an agricultural tractor and intended mainly to carry loads or to process materials used in connection with agriculture, fisheries, forestry or horticulture and where the ratio of the design gross vehicle weight to the unladen weight of that vehicle is equal to or greater than 3.0; and
- (b) does not include pieces of interchangeable towed equipment the ratio of the design gross vehicle weight to the unladen weight of which is equal to or greater than 3.0;

‘articulated vehicle’ means the combination of a tractor unit (not being an agricultural tractor) and a semi-trailer attached by partial superimposition and so constructed and attached that not less than 20 per cent of the weight of the drawn vehicle is borne by the mechanically propelled vehicle;

‘authorisation plate’ means an authorisation plate issued and fitted in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Road Traffic (Plating and Speed Rating of Agricultural Vehicles) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 247 of 2014);

‘authorised distributor’ means a person who holds a franchise from a vehicle manufacturer to sell particular makes and models of vehicles manufactured by that manufacturer and who is authorised to represent the manufacturer and to act on its behalf in matters covered by these Regulations;

‘centre-axle trailer’ means a trailer where the axle is, or where there is more than one axle, the axles are, positioned close to the centre of gravity of the trailer, when uniformly loaded, so that only a small static vertical load, not exceeding 10% of that corresponding to the design gross vehicle weight of the trailer or a load of 1000 kilogrammes, whichever is the lesser, is transmitted to the drawing vehicle;

‘design gross vehicle weight’ means the gross weight of a vehicle laden with the heaviest load that it can reasonably carry having regard to the engine, brakes, tyres and general construction of such vehicle and shall, until the contrary is shown:

- (a) in the case of an agricultural tractor, agricultural trailer or piece of interchangeable towed equipment, be taken to be its design gross vehicle weight as specified:
  - (i) by its manufacturer, or
  - (ii) where the design gross vehicle weight as specified by the manufacturer is not ascertainable, by the authorised distributor; and
- (b) in every other case, be taken to be the vehicle’s design gross vehicle weight as specified:
  - (i) by its manufacturer, or
  - (ii) where the design gross vehicle weight as specified by its manufacturer is not ascertainable:
    - (A) by the authorised distributor, or
    - (B) by a suitably qualified individual;

‘drawbar trailer’ means a trailer having at least two axles which is equipped with a towing device which can move vertically in relation to the trailer and which transmits a static vertical load of less than 100 kilograms to the drawing vehicle;

‘fully mounted agricultural equipment’ means interchangeable machinery that is fully raised from the ground or that cannot articulate around a vertical axis to the agricultural tractor or self-propelled agricultural machine to which it is attached;

‘interchangeable towed equipment’ means any vehicle that is used in agriculture, fisheries, forestry or horticulture and which is designed to be drawn by an agricultural tractor:

- (a) which vehicle may include any or none of the following features:

- (i) the ability to change or add to the functions of such agricultural tractor,
- (ii) the incorporation, permanently, of an implement,
- (iii) an ability, by design, to process materials,
- (iv) a load platform that is designed and constructed to:
  - (A) receive any tools and appliances that are needed for any of the foregoing purposes, or
  - (B) store temporarily any materials that are produced or needed during work; and
- (b) the ratio of the design gross vehicle weight to the unladen weight of which vehicle is less than 3.0;

‘Lighting Regulations’ means the Road Traffic (Lighting of Vehicles) Regulations 1963 (S.I. No. 189 of 1963) as amended;

‘manufacturer’s plate’ means the plate referred to in Annex V of Council Directive 2009/144/EC of 30 November 2009<sup>1</sup> on certain components and characteristics of wheeled agricultural or forestry tractors;

‘mechanically propelled vehicle’ has the meaning assigned to it by section 3 of the Road Traffic Act 1961 (No. 24 of 1961);

‘plated’ means, in the case of an agricultural tractor, such a tractor that is fitted with a manufacturer’s plate, and in the case of an agricultural trailer, such a trailer that is fitted with an authorisation plate;

‘rigid drawbar trailer’ means a trailer which:

- (a) has one axle or one group of axles;
- (b) is fitted with a drawbar which, due to its construction, transmits a static load not exceeding 4000 kilogrammes to the drawing vehicle;
- (c) is fitted with a coupling other than one consisting of a king pin and a fifth wheel; and
- (d) does not meet the definition of a centre-axle trailer;

‘suitably qualified individual’ means a mechanical or automotive engineer, an automotive assessor or a person with similar qualifications who, by reason of his or her competence, experience and independence, is an appropriate person to assess the fitness and safety of a vehicle and who carries the appropriate indemnity relative to his or her position;

<sup>1</sup>OJ L 27, 30.1.2010

‘track-laying’ in relation to a vehicle means a vehicle that is propelled by endless tracks or by a combination of wheels and endless tracks;

‘trailer’ means a vehicle attached to a mechanically propelled vehicle (or to another vehicle attached to a mechanically propelled vehicle) or a vehicle constructed or adapted for the purpose of being drawn by a mechanically propelled vehicle, and unless otherwise provided, includes a drawbar, rigid drawbar and centre-axle trailer but does not include a semi-trailer;

‘UN/ECE Regulation 55’ means Regulation 55 of the United Nations Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and/or be used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of These Prescriptions, incorporating amendments up to and including the 01 series of amendments dated 13 April 2012;

‘unladen weight’ means:

- (a) in the case of an agricultural tractor, the weight excluding the driver and optional accessories such as front or rear weights, tyre ballast, mounted implements, mounted equipment or any specialised components but including coolant, oils, fuel, tools and the roll-over protective structure,
- (b) in any other case, the weight when not carrying passengers or a load;

‘unplated’ means, in the case of an agricultural tractor, such a tractor that is not fitted with a manufacturer’s plate, and in the case of an agricultural trailer, such a trailer that is not fitted with an authorisation plate;”;

- (c) the substitution in Regulation 2(1) for paragraph (d) in the definition of “tractor” of the following:

“(d) in the case of an agricultural tractor, a detachable platform, container or implement (being a platform, container or implement used primarily for farm work) together with the load on or in such platform, container or implement;”.

*Amendment of Regulation 3 of the Regulations of 2003.*

5. Regulation 3(1) of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by:

- (a) the deletion of the definition of “triaxle”; and
- (b) the insertion of the following definitions:

“‘flexible suspension system’ means, in relation to a trailer, an air suspension system, an equivalent system or a suspension system that

incorporates a spring or a shock-absorbing device or both between the axle or axles and the trailer chassis;

‘flotation tyres’ means pneumatic tyres with an inflation pressure not exceeding 4 bar of which the area of contact with the road surface is not less than 500 millimetres in width when measured at right angles to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle;

‘steering function’ in relation to a trailer fitted with steering equipment means a steering or steered axles which comply with the technical provisions of UN/ECE Regulation 79;

‘triaxle’ means three successive axles, not being part of a four axle bogie, the outermost of which are spaced at a distance apart of not more than 3.25 metres or 3.7 metres in the case of a rigid drawbar agricultural trailer;

‘UN/ECE Regulation 79’ means Regulation 79 of the United Nations Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and/or used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these Prescriptions, Revision 2, including the amendments which entered into force on 16 October 1995;”.

*Substitution of Regulation 5 of the Regulations of 2003.*

6. The Regulations of 2003 are amended by the substitution for Regulation 5 of the following:

“5. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a single axle of a mechanically propelled vehicle or trailer shall not exceed 10 tonnes.

(2) The weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a single axle which is the sole driving axle of a vehicle may, where the axle is fitted with twin tyres, exceed 10 tonnes but shall not exceed 10.5 tonnes.

(3) The weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a single axle which is the sole driving axle of a mechanically propelled vehicle may, where the axle is fitted with twin tyres and an air suspension system or an equivalent system, exceed 10 tonnes but shall not exceed 11.5 tonnes.

(4) The weight transmitted to the surface of the road by an agricultural tractor may, in the case of a driven axle, exceed 10 tonnes but shall not exceed 11.5 tonnes.”.

*Amendment of Regulation 6 of the Regulations of 2003.*

7. Regulation 6 of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by:

(a) the substitution for Regulation 6(1)(c) of the following:

“(c) 18 tonnes, if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.3 metres and less than 1.8 metres, provided that in the case of a rigid drawbar trailer manufactured on or after 1 January 2016, a flexible suspension system shall be fitted.”, and

(b) the substitution for Regulation 6(3) of the following:

“(3) The weight transmitted to the surface of a road by the tandem axles of a trailer or semi-trailer where the distance between the axles is not less than 1.8 metres may exceed 18 tonnes but shall not exceed 20 tonnes.

(4) Regulation 6(3) shall apply to a rigid drawbar trailer manufactured on or after 1 January 2016 provided that such trailer is also equipped with a flexible suspension system and steering function.

(5) Subject to Regulation 21, the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by an unplated tandem axle rigid drawbar agricultural trailer shall not exceed 16 tonnes.

(6) Subject to Regulation 21, the weight transmitted to the surface of the road by the tandem axle of a plated rigid drawbar agricultural trailer shall not exceed:

(a) 16 tonnes if the distance between the axles is less than 1.3 metres,

(b) 18 tonnes if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.3 metres but less than 1.8 metres and the trailer is fitted with a flexible suspension system,

(c) 20 tonnes if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.3 metres and the trailer is fitted with a flexible suspension system and flotation tyres,

(d) 20 tonnes if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.8 metres and the trailer is fitted with a flexible suspension system and steering function.”.

*Substitution of Regulation 7 of the Regulations of 2003.*

8. The Regulations of 2003 are amended by the substitution for Regulation 7 of the following:

“7. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a triaxle shall not exceed:

(a) 21 tonnes, if the distance between the two closest adjacent axles is less than 1.3 metres, or

(b) 24 tonnes, if the distance between the two closest adjacent axles is not less than 1.3 metres, provided that in the case of a rigid drawbar



trailer manufactured on or after 1 January 2016, a flexible suspension system shall be fitted.

(2) Subject to Regulation 21, the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by an unplated triaxle rigid drawbar agricultural trailer shall not exceed 19.5 tonnes.

(3) Subject to Regulation 21, the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a plated triaxle rigid drawbar agricultural trailer shall not exceed:

- (a) 21 tonnes if the distance between the axles is less than 1.3 metres,
- (b) 24 tonnes if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.3 metres but less than 1.8 metres and the trailer is fitted with a flexible suspension system,
- (c) 27 tonnes if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.3 metres and the trailer is fitted with a flexible suspension system and flotation tyres,
- (d) 30 tonnes if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.8 metres and the trailer is fitted with a flexible suspension system, flotation tyres, and steering function on both the foremost and rearmost axles.”.

*Substitution of Regulation 8 of the Regulations of 2003.*

9. The Regulations of 2003 are amended by the substitution for Regulation 8 of the following:

“8. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a four axle bogie shall not exceed 24 tonnes.

(2) Subject to Regulation 21, the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a four axle bogie of a plated rigid drawbar agricultural trailer shall not exceed:

- (a) 21 tonnes if the distance between the axles is less than 1.3 metres,
- (b) 24 tonnes if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.3 metres but less than 1.8 metres and the trailer is fitted with a flexible suspension system,
- (c) 27 tonnes if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.3 metres and the trailer is fitted with a flexible suspension system and flotation tyres,
- (d) 30 tonnes if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.8 metres and the trailer is fitted with a flexible suspension system, flotation tyres, and steering function on both the foremost and rearmost axles.”.

*Substitution of Regulation 9 of the Regulations of 2003.*

10. The Regulations of 2003 are amended by the substitution for Regulation 9 of the following:

“9. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight laden of a vehicle, other than an agricultural tractor or a rigid drawbar agricultural trailer having 2 axles, shall not exceed:

- (a) 16 tonnes, if the distance between the front and rear axles is less than 3 metres, or
- (b) 18 tonnes, if the distance between the front and rear axles is not less than 3 metres.

(2) The weight laden of an agricultural tractor having two axles shall not exceed 18 tonnes.”.

*Amendment of Regulation 10 of the Regulations of 2003.*

11. Regulation 10 of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by:

- (a) the substitution of the following for Regulation 10(4):

“(4) The weight laden, expressed in tonnes, of a rigid mechanically propelled vehicle or of a drawbar trailer, having 3 axles, shall not exceed the number obtained when the distance between the extreme front and rear axles, expressed in metres correct to one decimal place, is multiplied by 5.5.”, and

- (b) the insertion of the following after Regulation 10(6):

“(7) The weight laden of an agricultural tractor having 3 axles shall not exceed 24 tonnes.

(8) The provisions of this Regulation shall not apply to a rigid drawbar agricultural trailer.”.

*Amendment of Regulation 11 of the Regulations of 2003.*

12. Regulation 11 of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by:

- (a) the substitution of the following for Regulation 11(3):

“(3) The weight laden, expressed in tonnes, of a rigid mechanically propelled vehicle or drawbar trailer having 4 axles, shall not exceed the number obtained when the distance between the extreme front and rear axles, expressed in metres correct to one decimal place, is multiplied by 5.”, and

- (b) the insertion of the following after Regulation 11(4):

“(5) This Regulation does not apply to an agricultural tractor or a rigid drawbar agricultural trailer.”.

*Insertion of Regulation 15A into the Regulations of 2003.*

13. The Regulations of 2003 are amended by the insertion of the following after Regulation 15:

“15A. The provisions of Regulations 16, 17, 18 and 19 do not apply to an agricultural tractor and agricultural trailer combination.”.

*Amendment of Regulation 20 of the Regulations of 2003.*

14. Regulation 20 of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by the insertion of the following after Regulation 20(1):

“(1A) The weight transmitted to any strip of the surface of a road upon which a track-laying vehicle rests, contained between any two parallel lines drawn 600 millimetres apart on that surface at right angles to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle, shall not exceed 10 tonnes.”.

*Substitution of Regulation 21 of the Regulations of 2003.*

15. The Regulations of 2003 are amended by the substitution for Regulation 21 of the following:

“21. (1) Subject to paragraph (2), in the case of an agricultural tractor and agricultural trailer combination, the weight laden of the trailer, including the vertical load imposed by it on the tractor’s coupling, shall not exceed:

- (a) where either of them is unplated, 3 times the tractor’s unladen weight subject to it not in any case exceeding:
  - (i) 13 tonnes for a rigid drawbar single axle trailer, 19 tonnes in the case of a tandem axle or 22.5 tonnes in the case of a triaxle; or
  - (ii) 16 tonnes for a drawbar or centre-axle trailer where the axles are separated by a distance of less than 3.0 metres, or 18 tonnes where the axles are separated by a distance of 3.0 metres or greater; or
  - (iii) 25 tonnes in the case of a drawbar or centre-axle trailer equipped with three axles; or
  - (iv) 30 tonnes for a drawbar or centre-axle trailer equipped with four axles, or
- (b) where both of them are plated, the lesser of the weights declared on the manufacturer’s plate affixed to the tractor under the heading ‘Permissible Towable Weight’ or those declared on the authorisation plate affixed to the trailer under the heading ‘Weights not to be Exceeded in Ireland’.

(2) In any case, the vertical load imposed on the coupling of an agricultural tractor shall not exceed the lower of:

- (a) the manufacturer's specifications,
- (b) 3000 kilograms, or
- (c) 4,000 kilograms in the case of a coupling to ISO 24347 approved to Directive 94/20/EEC, 89/173/EEC, or 2009/144/EEC, or UN/ECE Regulation 55.”.

*Amendment of Regulation 23 of the Regulations of 2003.*

16. Regulation 23 of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by the substitution of the following for Regulation 23(2)(h) and (i):

- “(h) retractable steps,
- (i) the deflected part of the tyre walls immediately above the point of contact with the ground, and
- (j) in the case of agricultural trailers and interchangeable towed equipment fitted with flotation tyres, the projecting part of such tyres and associated mudguards protruding beyond the bodywork on each side of the vehicle up to a maximum of 100 millimetres, and devices associated with hydraulic rear door opening mechanisms.”.

*Amendment of Regulation 26 of the Regulations of 2003.*

17. Regulation 26 of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by:

- (a) the substitution for Regulation 26(1)(c) of the following:

“(c) fully mounted agricultural equipment that is in use in a public place in the day time and provided that, during lighting up hours, such equipment complies with the requirements of the Lighting Regulations.”, and

- (b) the substitution for Regulation 26(5) of the following:

“(5) The overall width of a goods vehicle, goods trailer, an agricultural trailer or interchangeable towed equipment with a design gross vehicle weight in excess of 3.5 tonnes may exceed 2.50 metres but shall not exceed 2.55 metres.”.

*Amendment of Regulation 36 of the Regulations of 2003.*

18. Regulation 36 of the Regulations of 2003 (as amended by Regulation 2 of the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 (S.I. No. 366 of 2008) and Regulation 2 of the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 (No. 166 of 2014) is amended by:

- (a) the substitution for Regulation 36(2)(c) and (d) of the following:

“(c) a trailer, other than an agricultural trailer or interchangeable towed equipment that was first licensed,

(d) an agricultural trailer or interchangeable towed equipment that was first used, or”, and

(b) the insertion in Regulation 36(3) of the following definitions:

“‘agricultural or goods vehicle combination’ means a goods trailer or semi-trailer when drawn by a goods vehicle or tractor unit, or an agricultural trailer when drawn by an agricultural tractor;

‘baled’ refers to a large bundle of hay, silage, straw or other animal fodder that is bound with cord, netting, plastic or twine such that none of the hay, silage, straw or other animal fodder is loose;

‘hay’ includes grass, moss, clover, lucerne, sainfoin, rushes, ferns, reeds, bracken, heather, alfalfa meal, which has been cut, dried and is intended for use as animal fodder;

‘silage’ means grass or other green fodder compacted and stored in airtight conditions, without first being dried and used as animal feed;

‘straw’ means dried stalks of grain, used especially as fodder or livestock bedding.”

*Amendment of Regulation 41 of the Regulations of 2003.*

19. Regulation 41 of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by the substitution for Regulation 41(1) of the following:

“(1) In the case of a trailer, other than a trailer equipped with a steering function in accordance with these Regulations, which can be steered by its own steering gear, an attendant shall be present in the trailer in charge of the steering gear whenever the trailer is being drawn.”.

*Amendment of Regulation 48 of the Regulations of 2003.*

20. Regulation 48(2) of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by the substitution for Regulation 48(2)(i), (j) and (k) of the following:

“(i) an agricultural tractor,

(j) interchangeable towed equipment,

(k) subject to the Regulations 6, 7 and 8, an agricultural trailer or a trailer used solely for the haulage of felled trees, where all the wheels of such trailer are fitted with pneumatic tyres and where the maximum weight transmitted to the surface of a road by any single axle of the trailer does not exceed 5 tonnes,”.

*Amendment of Regulation 49 of the Regulations of 2003.*

21. Regulation 49 of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by the substitution for Regulation 49(2) of the following:

“(2) This Regulation does not prohibit the use in a public place of a track-laying agricultural tractor with an unladen weight not exceeding 7.25 tonnes or a track-laying agricultural tractor registered before 1 July 1964 subject in each case to the following conditions:

- (a) the parts of the track which come into contact with the road surface shall be flat and have a minimum width of 12 millimetres,
- (b) the total area of each track actually in contact with the road surface at any time shall be not less than 230 square centimetres in respect of each tonne of the total weight of the vehicle which is transferred to the road surface by means of the tracks, and
- (c) the vehicle shall not draw in a public place any trailer, other than an agricultural trailer, interchangeable towed equipment or a trailer conveying other interchangeable equipment which cannot be transported in a public place when mounted on the rear of the tractor due to its width.”.

*Amendment of Regulation 50 of the Regulations of 2003.*

22. Regulation 50(2) of the Regulations of 2003 is amended by the substitution for Regulation 50(2)(c) of the following:

“(c) interchangeable towed equipment.”.

*Amendment of Regulation 52 of the Regulations of 2003.*

23. Regulation 52 of the Regulations of 2003 is amended:

- (a) in Regulation 52(2)(b) by the substitution for “land” of “agricultural”,
- (b) in Regulation 52(3) by the substitution for Regulation 52(3)(a) of “(a) an agricultural tractor,”,
- (c) in Regulation 52(4) by the substitution for Regulation 52(4)(a) of “(a) agricultural trailers and interchangeable towed equipment,”.



GIVEN under my Official Seal, this  
10th day of June, 2014.

LEO VARADKAR T.D.,  
Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport.

## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Instrument and does not purport to be a legal interpretation).*

These regulations amend the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 2003 to update the weights and dimensional-related requirements for agricultural and forestry vehicles (including agricultural tractors, agricultural trailers, fully mounted agricultural equipment and interchangeable towed equipment). They come into effect on 1 January 2016.

National weight limits of 18 and 24 tonnes respectively are introduced for two and three axle agricultural tractors with limits of 13, 19 and 22.5 tonnes introduced for rigid drawbar single, tandem and triaxle agricultural trailers respectively. However higher limits of up to 24 and 34 tonnes are permitted for rigid drawbar tandem and triaxle agricultural trailers respectively that are plated; subject to them satisfying additional technical requirements such as a mandate for the fitment of a flexible suspension system, flotation tyres and a steered or steering axles on trailers with axle centres of 1.8 metres or greater.

As regards dimensions, the overall width of an agricultural trailer or piece of interchangeable towed equipment with a design gross vehicle weight exceeding 3.5 tonnes has been increased from 2.5 to 2.55 metres. This is to align it with the requirement that is already applicable to goods trailers. Note however that the following items are disregarded in the calculation of the overall width of an agricultural trailer or piece of interchangeable towed equipment; the projecting part of flotation tyres and associated mudguards protruding beyond the bodywork on each side of the vehicle up to a maximum of 100 millimetres, and devices associated with hydraulic rear door opening mechanisms.

Requirements are also introduced pertaining to the maximum vertical load that can be exerted on an agricultural tractor's coupling by a trailer's drawbar, which must not exceed the lower of the tractor manufacturer's specifications, 3 tonnes, or 4 tonnes in the case of a ball and spoon type coupling which has been approved for this load.

Finally, combinations of agricultural tractors and trailers, where either of them is unplated, will have their maximum towable mass capped at 3 times the tractor's unladen weight.

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