

Re: Temporary derogation from certain aspects of the EU driving and resting time rules for the transport of animal feed to relieve pressures on farming caused by prolonged dry weather

28th August 2026

The Road Safety Authority (RSA) and the Department of Transport (DoT) have agreed to allow a temporary and urgent derogation in respect of certain provisions of the EU driving and resting time rules for the drivers of vehicles undertaking the transport of ANIMAL FEED throughout Ireland.

The move is being made in order to address pressures in the agri-supply chain arising from prolonged dry weather, especially in the south and south-east of the country.

The derogation is supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) who consider that the prolonged dry weather and resulting exceptional pressure on fodder and animal feed supplies provides a strong basis for this temporary derogation. The measures will provide additional flexibility for drivers and the farming sector in keeping the agri-supply chain operating, while at the same time balancing driver welfare and road safety objectives.

Coming into effect: The derogation will apply from **31st August 2026** and will run until **13th September 2026** inclusive. For this period, the following provisions will be temporarily relaxed for drivers of heavy goods vehicles involved in the transport of animal feed, within Ireland, as follows:

- **Derogation to Article 6(3) of Regulation 561/2006:** the fortnightly driving limit is lifted from 90 hours to 100 hours;
- **Derogation to Article 8(4) of the Regulation 561/2006:** the maximum of 3 reduced daily rest periods between any 2 weekly rest periods is lifted from 3 to 4;



- **Derogation to Article 8(6) of Regulation 561/2006:** the rules relating to weekly rest are being relaxed by allowing drivers to take a reduced weekly rest of at least 24 hours in each consecutive week during the relaxation period. There will be no obligation on a driver to take at least one regular weekly rest period in any 2 consecutive weeks until the derogation expires. Furthermore, there will not be any requirement for compensation where reduced weekly rest is being taken.

While the derogations are proposed for an initial 14 day period to deal exclusively for transport of animal feed, the RSA and the DoT will keep this under review and consider the need for an extension of same on the basis of further engagement with the relevant stakeholders.

While the current situation may impact on driving time, driver safety or other road user's safety must not be compromised. Drivers should not deviate from the rules if it jeopardises road safety nor should they be expected to drive whilst tired. Employers remain responsible for the health and safety of their employees and other road users.

There is no change to the rules relating to working time.

Notes:

Operator obligations: The RSA wishes to emphasise that HGV operators are required to mitigate the risks of disruption to transport operations and to plan accordingly and ensure compliance with the rules.

Transport undertakings and drivers must ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to record any extra driving time being undertaken by drivers availing of the derogation. Drivers must record on the back of their analogue tachograph charts or digital tachograph printouts (as soon as they finish their daily working period) the reasons and justification why they are exceeding the prescribed limits.

HGV operators must put in place contingency measures to cater for emergency and urgent situations, and this must be properly documented and retained for inspection.



Documentary evidence in support of the reason for taking extra driving should be retained for at least 12 months. Any deviation from the driving and resting time rules must be a last resort. During inspections, the history of the driver and operator overall compliance with the rules will be carefully assessed.

While the current situation may impact on driving time, driver safety or other road users safety must not be compromised. Drivers should not deviate from the rules if it jeopardises road safety nor should they be expected to drive whilst tired. Employers remain responsible for the health and safety of their employees and other road users.

