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Tow Truck Licensing and Permit Requirements Guidelines

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Amendments

Revision Number	Revision Date	Description of Key Changes	Section
1	30/06/2023	Updated document to align with revised HLTT Period Permit Operating Conditions.	All
2	12/09/2024	Updated entire document to reflect current permit products.	All
3	24/09/2025	Updated definitions and Period Permit types.	s.6
4	27/10/2025	Updated links within the References and Related Documents table.	p.4

REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

Document Name	Location
Heavy Lift Tow Truck Period Permit Operating Conditions	https://www.mainroads.wa.gov.au/4a4bd6/globalassets/heavy-vehicles/permits-orders-schemes/heavy-lift-tow-truck/heavy-lift-tow-truck-period-permit-operating-conditions.pdf
Procedure for Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Approvals	https://www.mainroads.wa.gov.au/49e8ff/globalassets/heavy-vehicles/permits-orders-schemes/heavy-lift-tow-truck/procedure-for-heavy-lift-tow-truck-single-movement-approvals.pdf?v=49ed70

DEFINITIONS

The following are definitions for terms used in these Guidelines. Refer to the definitions in the *Road Traffic (Administration) Act 2008* and the *Road Traffic (Vehicles) Act 2012* and any subsidiary legislation to these Acts for the meanings of any terms not defined in this section. If a definition in the relevant Acts or the subsidiary legislation conflicts with a definition in this section, the definition in this section prevails for the purpose of these Guidelines.

Term	Definition
Commissioner of Main Roads	A reference to the Commissioner of Main Roads in these Guidelines is a reference to Main Roads Heavy Vehicle Services who have the delegated authority to act on behalf of the Commissioner.
Disabled Vehicle	A vehicle that is disabled due to a mechanical or electrical fault, or due to being involved in an accident, preventing it from operating under its own motive power.
Heavy Lift Tow Truck	A motor vehicle equipped with a crane used or intended to be used for the lifting, salvaging or towing of heavy vehicles, including an underlift tow truck and an overlift tow truck fitted with a fifth wheel coupling near the centre of the drive axle group and complying with Australian Standard AS 2174.1-2006 and AS/NZS 4968.2:2003.
HLTT	Heavy Lift Tow Truck
HVS	Main Roads Heavy Vehicle Services
Main Roads Website	www.mainroads.wa.gov.au
Motor Vehicle	A vehicle propelled by a motor that forms part of the vehicle.
Permit	A permit issued by HVS under the provisions of Part 4 of the <i>Road Traffic (Vehicles) Act 2012</i> .
Heavy Lift Tow Truck - Single Movement Permit	A single use permit issued to a specific HLTT on a specific route.
Tow Truck	A motor vehicle that is: a) equipped with a crane, winch, ramp, or other lifting or loading device; and b) used or intended to be used for the towing or salvaging of a motor vehicle.

1 PURPOSE

These guidelines have been developed to ensure there is a consistent understanding of the requirements associated with a HLTT towing a disabled heavy vehicle or vehicle combination.

2 LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Tow Trucks

- 2.1.1 A HLTT must be licensed as a tow truck.
- 2.1.2 A person must not use or drive a HLTT as a tow truck, unless the vehicle licence for the HLTT allows it to be used as a tow truck.
- 2.1.3 Despite being licensed as a tow truck, the HLTT must be maintained in a manner that conforms with the definition of a tow truck.

2.2 Towed Vehicles

A vehicle licence is not required for an unlicensed motor vehicle being towed by a tow truck.

3 WA HEAVY VEHICLE ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENT

- 3.1.1 To obtain a *Heavy Lift Tow Truck - Single Movement Permit* from HVS, the operator of a HLTT must be accredited under the WA Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme (WAHVAS), if they have applied for more than 4 Single Trip Permits in a calendar year.
- 3.1.2 To obtain a *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Period Permit* from HVS, the operator of a HLTT must be accredited under the WA Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme (WAHVAS).

4 PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

4.1 General Requirements

- 4.1.1 Part 8 of the *Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014* prescribes the mass and dimension requirements for vehicles, hereinafter referred to as the statutory mass and dimension limits. Nothing in the Act or Regulations exempts a HLTT from the statutory mass and dimension limits.
- 4.1.2 A HLTT requires a permit if it and/or the vehicle it is towing, exceeds any statutory mass or dimension limit. The main statutory mass and dimension limits are as follows:
 - (a) 2.5 metres in width;
 - (b) 4.3 metres in height;
 - (c) 12.5 metres in length without the towed vehicle connected;
 - (d) 19 metres in length with the towed vehicle connected;
 - (e) 42.5 tonnes gross mass;
 - (f) 6.5 tonnes on the steer axle with tyres less than 375mm wide;
 - (g) 7.0 tonnes on the steer axle with tyres at least 375mm wide;
 - (h) 10 tonnes on a twin steer axle group with non-load sharing suspension;
 - (i) 11 tonnes on a twin steer axle group with load sharing suspension and tyres less than 375mm wide;

- (j) 12 tonnes on a twin steer axle group with load sharing suspension and tyres at least 375mm wide;
- (k) 9 tonnes on a single axle with dual tyres;
- (l) 16.5 tonnes on a tandem axle group with dual tyres;
- (m) 20 tonnes on a tri or quad axle group, with dual tyres.

- 4.1.3** A permit issued by HVS to a HLTT that exceeds a mass and/or dimension limit only applies if the towed vehicle is disabled, i.e. has a mechanical failure or has been involved in an accident, or to move the disabled vehicle between places of repair.
- 4.1.4** A HLTT that is within the statutory mass and dimension limits, with the towed vehicle connected, does not require a permit to operate.

5 ARTICULATED VEHICLES AND VEHICLE COMBINATIONS

5.1 Towing an Articulated Vehicle

- 5.1.1** The definition of an articulated vehicle in the *Road Traffic Code 2000* refers to a motor vehicle with a pivot point between the front and rear wheels, such as an articulated bus or articulated mobile crane.
- 5.1.2** Regulation 418 of the *Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014* stipulates that a WA police officer or the Commissioner of Main Roads may give permission to tow a disabled articulated vehicle to a place where it will not constitute a hazard, if it is considered unsafe to uncouple the vehicle to tow part of the vehicle only.

5.2 Towing a Vehicle Combination

- 5.2.1** Regulation 279 of the *Road Traffic Code 2000* stipulates a person must not drive any vehicle to which more than one other vehicle is directly or indirectly attached, without approval from the Commissioner of Main Roads.
- 5.2.2** In most cases, a HLTT towing a vehicle combination will exceed statutory mass and/or dimension limits, therefore will require a permit.

6 PERMIT OPTIONS

6.1 Period Permits

- 6.1.1** The following HLTT Period Permits are available:
- Heavy Lift Tow Truck – Statutory Mass – Period Permit
 - Heavy Lift Tow Truck – 21t Tandem Drive Over Mass – Period Permit
 - Heavy Lift Tow Truck – 23t Tandem Drive Over Mass – Period Permit
 - Heavy Lift Tow Truck – 23.5t Tri Drive Over Mass – Period Permit
 - Heavy Lift Tow Truck – 27t Tri Drive Over Mass – Period Permit
- 6.1.2** A HLTT operating under a HLTT Period Permit must be operated in accordance with the Heavy Lift Tow Truck Period Permit Operating Conditions.

6.2 Single Movement Permit

- 6.2.1** A HLTT or HLTT operator that is unable to comply with the HLTT Period Permit requirements, may operate under a *Heavy Lift Tow Truck - Single Trip Movement Permit*.
- 6.2.2** A *Heavy Lift Tow Truck - Single Trip Movement Permit* will be issued in accordance with the [Procedure for Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Approvals](#).

7 CONTACT DETAILS FOR SINGLE MOVEMENT PERMITS

- 7.1.1** To apply for a *Heavy Lift Tow Truck - Single Movement Permit* during the following business hours, contact HVS on 138 486 or by emailing hvs@mainroads.wa.gov.au :
- 7am - 6:00 pm Monday – Friday
 - 7am - 3:30pm Weekends and Public Holidays
- 7.1.2** To apply for a *Heavy Lift Tow Truck - Single Movement Permit* after-hours, contact the Main Roads Customer Information Centre on 138 138 who will make direct contact with the on-call after-hours HVS officer.