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Procedure for Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Approvals

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Amendments

Revision Number	Revision Date	Description of Key Changes	Section
1	01/12/2021	Clarified business hours and after-hours.	s.2 & 3
2	30/06/2023	Updated document title and content to align with revised HLTT Period Permit Operating Conditions.	All
3	02/07/2025	Added circumstances where Permit Assessors may issue permits. Allowed SPVs to be towed. Aligned speeds to period permit.	cl. 4.1, 4.4, 6.2, 6.5
4	27/10/2025	Updated links to referenced and related documents.	All

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
After-hours Officer	The after-hours officers for the HVS Permits Section.
Approved Network	The Approved Network specified in the permit or order applicable to the towed vehicle or vehicle combination.
Articulated Vehicle	A motor vehicle with a pivot point between the front and rear wheels, such as an articulated bus or articulated mobile crane.
Authorised Person	A person authorised under legislation to direct the towing of a vehicle, such as a member of the WA Police, Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Sheriff's Office, or Local Government Ranger.
Central Zones	The area within and including the boundaries of the Perth and Fremantle Central Zones as depicted in Appendix 1 .
Excess Mass	A mass that exceeds statutory mass limits or the mass limits allowed under a Permit or Order.
Flat Tow	A method of towing a disabled vehicle using a rigid drawbar, where the tow truck assumes the function of a block truck. All wheels of the towed vehicle remain on the ground and the steering of the towed vehicle is controlled by a competent person.
Heavy Lift Tow Truck	A motor vehicle equipped with a crane used or intended to be used for the lifting, salvaging, carrying or towing of heavy vehicles and includes any motor vehicle to which is attached (temporarily or otherwise) a device or trailer, which is used or intended to be used for the lifting, salvaging and carrying of any heavy vehicle.
HVS	Main Roads Heavy Vehicle Services
Overmass Vehicle	A vehicle operating under an overmass permit, such as a <i>Single Trip Overmass Permit</i> , an <i>Overmass Low Loader Period Permit</i> or a <i>Special Purpose Vehicle Permit</i> .
Oversize Vehicle	A vehicle operating under an oversize permit, such as a <i>Class 1 RAV Oversize Period Permit</i> or a <i>Single Trip Oversize Permit</i> .
Partial Lift Tow	A method of towing a disabled vehicle where the front wheels of the towed vehicle are only lifted the minimal amount necessary to enable the towed vehicle to be steered without transferring excess mass onto the drive axle group of the towed vehicle.
Permit	A permit issued by HVS under the provisions of Part 4 of the <i>Road Traffic (Vehicles) Act 2012</i> .
Serious Safety Hazard	Any situation that imposes a significant safety risk to any road user or pedestrian, due to matters such as high traffic volumes, high speed environment, congestion, poor visibility etc.
Single Trip Permit	A single use permit issued to a specific vehicle on a specific route.

Term	Definition
Statutory Dimension Limits	The dimension requirements prescribed in Part 8 of the <i>Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014</i> .
Statutory Mass Limits	The mass requirements prescribed in Part 8 of the <i>Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014</i> .
Tow Truck	A motor vehicle equipped with a crane used or intended to be used for the lifting, salvaging, carrying or towing of vehicles and includes any motor vehicle to which is attached (temporarily or otherwise) a device or trailer, which is used or intended to be used for the lifting, salvaging and carrying of any motor vehicle.
Vehicle Combination	More than one vehicle directly or indirectly attached to one another.

1 PURPOSE

The *Tow Truck Licensing and Permit Requirements Guidelines* outline the permits and other approvals required for a heavy lift tow truck to tow a disabled heavy vehicle or vehicle combination.

This document outlines the procedure a Main Roads Heavy Vehicle Services (HVS) Permit Assessor will follow when issuing a *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* to allow a Heavy Lift Tow Truck (HLTT) to tow a disabled articulated vehicle or a vehicle combination from the public road network.

2 PERMIT APPLICATION

If a single movement permit is required, the HLTT operator must submit a [Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit Application Form](#), available on the [Heavy Lift Tow Trucks page](#) on the Main Roads website. The form must be submitted to permit.applications@mainroads.wa.gov.au.

3 AFTER-HOURS CONTACT

If a permit is required after-hours (4:30pm to 8:30am Monday to Friday, or on Weekends), the HLTT operator must email the request form and then contact the Heavy Vehicle Helpdesk (138 486) or the Main Roads Customer Information Centre (138 138), who will make direct contact with the on-call after-hours officer.

4 APPROVAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 The *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Period Permit* is available to assist HLTT operators that need to tow heavy vehicles and vehicle combinations. Refer to the [Heavy Lift Tow Trucks page](#) on the Main Roads website.
- 4.1.2 If the request from the HLTT operator is to tow a heavy vehicle or vehicle combination and they do not hold a valid period permit, a *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* may be issued.
- 4.1.3 The HVS Permit Assessor will only issue a *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* to enable:
 - a) A disabled heavy vehicle or vehicle combination to be towed from the public road network; or
 - b) An unladen prime mover to be towed to the location of a disabled prime mover for the purpose of swapping out the disabled prime mover; or
 - c) An unladen motor vehicle or unladen damaged trailer to be towed to and from a place of repair or an auction yard; or
 - d) A heavy vehicle or vehicle combination to be towed under the direction of an Authorised Person; or
 - e) Other circumstances where HVS considers there is no safe and practical alternative method of transport.
- 4.1.4 When assessing the *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* application, the HVS Permit Assessor will assess the application in accordance with this procedure.

4.2 Vehicle Integrity

The HLTT operator must confirm the integrity of the towed vehicle has not been compromised as a result of an accident and the vehicle is safe to tow. A vehicle that has potential damage to the chassis, axles, braking system etc. may not be suitable for towing.

4.3 More Appropriate Vehicle

The HVS Permit Assessor must consider if there is a more appropriate vehicle that can be used to move the vehicle that the HLTT operator is requesting to tow, e.g. a semi-trailer must be towed using a prime mover, unless there is justification to use a HLTT.

4.4 Mass Requirements

- 4.4.1** The HVS Permit Assessor must check RAVS to confirm the HLTT's GVM and GCM is adequate for the mass specified on the application form.
- 4.4.2** The HVS Permit Assessor must confirm the mass on the HLTT's steer axle is at least 20% of the total mass of the laden HLTT (combined steer axle and drive axle mass). Where the steer axle mass is non-compliant, the HLTT must only be permitted to tow the vehicle to a location far enough off the road, so the vehicle no longer constitutes a hazard to traffic.
- 4.4.3** The HVS Permit Assessor must confirm the mass of the HLTT is within the following mass limits:

Axle Group	Mass Limit
Single Steer Axle with tyres <375mm	6.5 tonnes
Single Steer Axle with tyres ≥375mm	7.1 tonnes
Twin Steer Axle Group with non-load sharing suspension	10 tonnes
Twin Steer Axle Group with load sharing suspension and tyres <375mm	11 tonnes
Twin Steer Axle Group with load sharing suspension and tyres ≥375mm	12 tonnes
Tandem Drive Axle Group	21 tonnes
Tri Drive or Tridem Axle Group	27 tonnes

- 4.4.4** The HVS Permit Assessor must confirm the mass of the towed vehicle is within statutory mass limits, or the concessional mass limits applicable to the permit the towed vehicle was operating under prior to being connected to the HLTT.
- 4.4.5** If the towed vehicle is an overmass Special Purpose Vehicle, such as a mobile crane, the HLTT must only be permitted to flat tow the vehicle.
- 4.4.6** If the towed vehicle includes an overmass low loader or platform trailer, the HLTT operator must apply for a Single Trip Overmass Permit by completing the relevant form, as directed by the HVS Permit Assessor.

4.5 Height Requirements

- 4.5.1** The HVS Permit Assessor must check the overhead structures on the proposed route prior to approving the *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* to ensure there is a minimum of 300mm clearance between the highest point of the towed vehicle and the lowest point of any overhead structure.

- 4.5.2** The HVS Permit Assessor must not allow the HLTT to travel on a road that is not approved on RAV Network 2, if the height of the towed vehicle exceeds 4.3 metres, but not 4.6 metres, when connected to the HLTT.
- 4.5.3** If the height of the towed vehicle exceeds 4.3 metres when connected to the HLTT and access is required on a road not approved on RAV Network 2, or the towed vehicle exceeds 4.6 metres when connected to the HLTT, the HVS Permit Assessor must issue the *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* subject to the HLTT operator obtaining approval from the relevant overhead cable provider(s) prior to moving.

4.6 Width Requirements

- 4.6.1** The *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* may allow the HLTT to tow a vehicle that is over-width, as a result of damage, provided the overall width does not exceed 2.7 metres at night, or 3.5 metres during the day.
- 4.6.2** The *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* may allow the HLTT to tow an over-width rigid motor vehicle on approved roads or within approved areas, as specified on the permit or order applicable to the rigid motor vehicle.
- 4.6.3** If the towed vehicle is an Oversize Vehicle exceeding 3.5 metres in width, such as a vehicle carrying an oversize load, the HLTT operator must apply for a Single Trip Oversize Permit by completing the relevant form, as directed by the HVS Permit Assessor.

5 TOWED VEHICLE COUPLING REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Checking Tow Coupling D-Ratings

- 5.1.1** The tow couplings fitted to a towed vehicle combination must be sufficiently rated.
- 5.1.2** The HVS Permit Assessor must confirm all tow couplings throughout the vehicle combination are sufficiently rated before issuing the *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit*.

5.2 Minimum Tow Coupling D-Ratings

The HVS Permit Assessor must use the [D-Rating Calculator](#), available on the Main Roads website, to determine the minimum D-Rating for each coupling in the vehicle combination, including fifth wheel couplings and pin type couplings.

Note: The mass of the HLTT must be included in the D-Rating calculations. A guide to the mass information required when using the D-Rating Calculator is available in [Appendix 2](#).

5.3 Vehicle Combinations Not Meeting Minimum D-Rating Requirements

Where a vehicle combination does not meet one or more coupling D-Rating requirements, the HLTT must only tow the vehicle combination to a location far enough off the road, so the vehicle no longer constitutes a hazard to traffic.

6 ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Freeway Access

- 6.1.1** The *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* must not allow the HLTT to tow a heavy vehicle or vehicle combination on a Freeway, unless removing a disabled vehicle from the Freeway.

- 6.1.2** When removing a disabled heavy vehicle or vehicle combination from a Freeway, the HLTT must exit via the nearest off-ramp that provides access to an approved road for the type of vehicle being towed.

6.2 Restricted Bridges

- 6.2.1** The *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* must not allow the HLTT to cross a bridge specified in the relevant *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Restricted Structures Lists*, unless the HVS Permit Assessor has obtained approval from Main Roads Structure Engineering Branch (SEB).
- 6.2.2** If towing an overmass Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), the *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* must not allow the HLTT to cross a bridge specified in the restricted bridge list applicable to the SPV, unless the HVS Permit Assessor has obtained approval from Main Roads Structure Engineering Branch (SEB).

6.3 Approved Roads & Conditions

- 6.3.1** The *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* may allow the HLTT to tow a heavy vehicle or vehicle combination on the roads it would usually be permitted to travel on if it wasn't being towed.
- 6.3.2** The *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* must stipulate the HLTT must be accompanied by at least one (1) pilot vehicle, or a Main Roads Incident Response vehicle, to manage traffic when towing a bus exceeding 12.5 metres in length within a Central Zone.
- 6.3.3** The HVS Permit Assessor must take into account any conditions specified for a particular road in the Approved Network.

6.4 Railway Crossing Stacking Distances

While the HLTT is permitted to travel on the Approved Network applicable to a vehicle combination, the HVS Permit Assessor must check railway crossing stacking distances on the proposed route, to ensure they are adequate to accommodate the length of the HLTT and towed vehicle, prior to approving the *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit*.

6.5 Speed Restrictions

- 6.5.1** The HLTT must not be permitted to exceed a speed exceeding 10 km/h lower than the posted speed limit, where the posted speed limit is greater than 60 km/h, unless otherwise specified in this clause.
- 6.5.2** The HLTT must not tow a vehicle combination at a speed exceeding:
- a) For a rigid truck and dog trailer combination, 60km/h;
 - b) For an A-double combination ≤ 27.5 metres in length, 60km/h;
 - c) For a prime mover and semi-trailer combination, 80km/h;
 - d) For an A-double combination > 27.5 metres in length, 80km/h;
 - e) For any other vehicle combination, 70km/h.
- 6.5.3** The HLTT must not exceed a speed of 60 km/h when Partial Lift Towing or Flat Towing a vehicle, except if towing a bus.

7 PARTIAL LIFT TOW OR FLAT TOW

7.1 Minimum Mass Requirements

- 7.1.1** Where the drive axle mass exceeds allowable limits, or the steer axle mass is insufficient, the *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* may allow the HLLT to Partial Lift Tow or Flat Tow the heavy vehicle or vehicle combination, provided the HLTT has a minimum of 14 tonnes on a tandem drive axle group or 17 tonnes on a tri drive or tridem axle group.

7.2 Partial Lift Tow & Flat Tow Requirements

- 7.2.1** A Category 7 RAV and above, as defined in the *Prime Mover Combinations Operating Conditions*, must only be Partial Lift Towed or Flat Towed.
- 7.2.2** When Flat Towing a heavy vehicle or vehicle combination, a competent and qualified person must be control of the towed vehicle.

8 DANGEROUS GOODS

The *Heavy Lift Tow Truck Single Movement Permit* must only allow a HLTT to tow a heavy vehicle or vehicle combination loaded with dangerous goods for the minimum distance necessary, so the vehicle no longer constitutes a hazard to traffic.

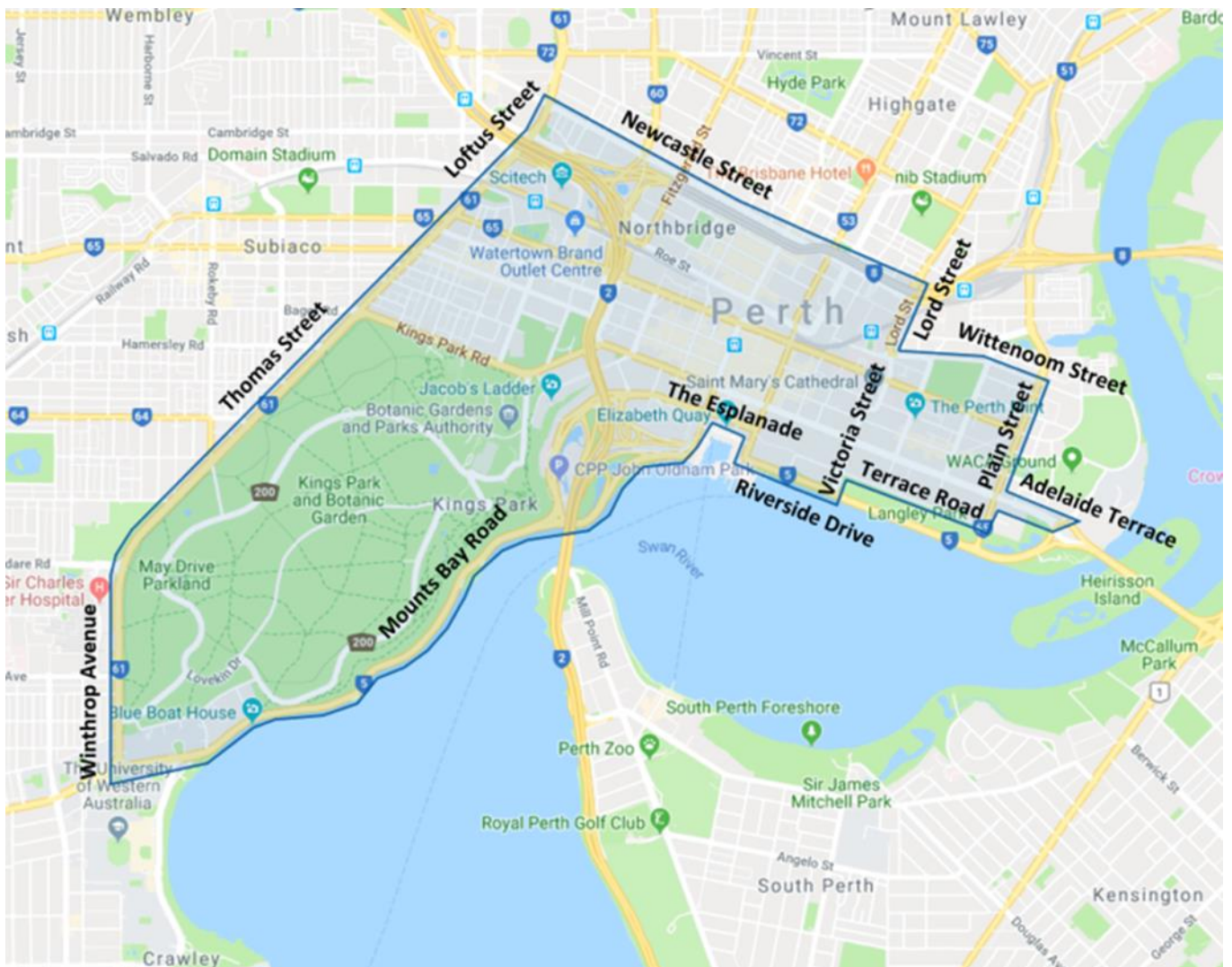
9 REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

The following documents relate to this procedure and are available on the Main Roads website:

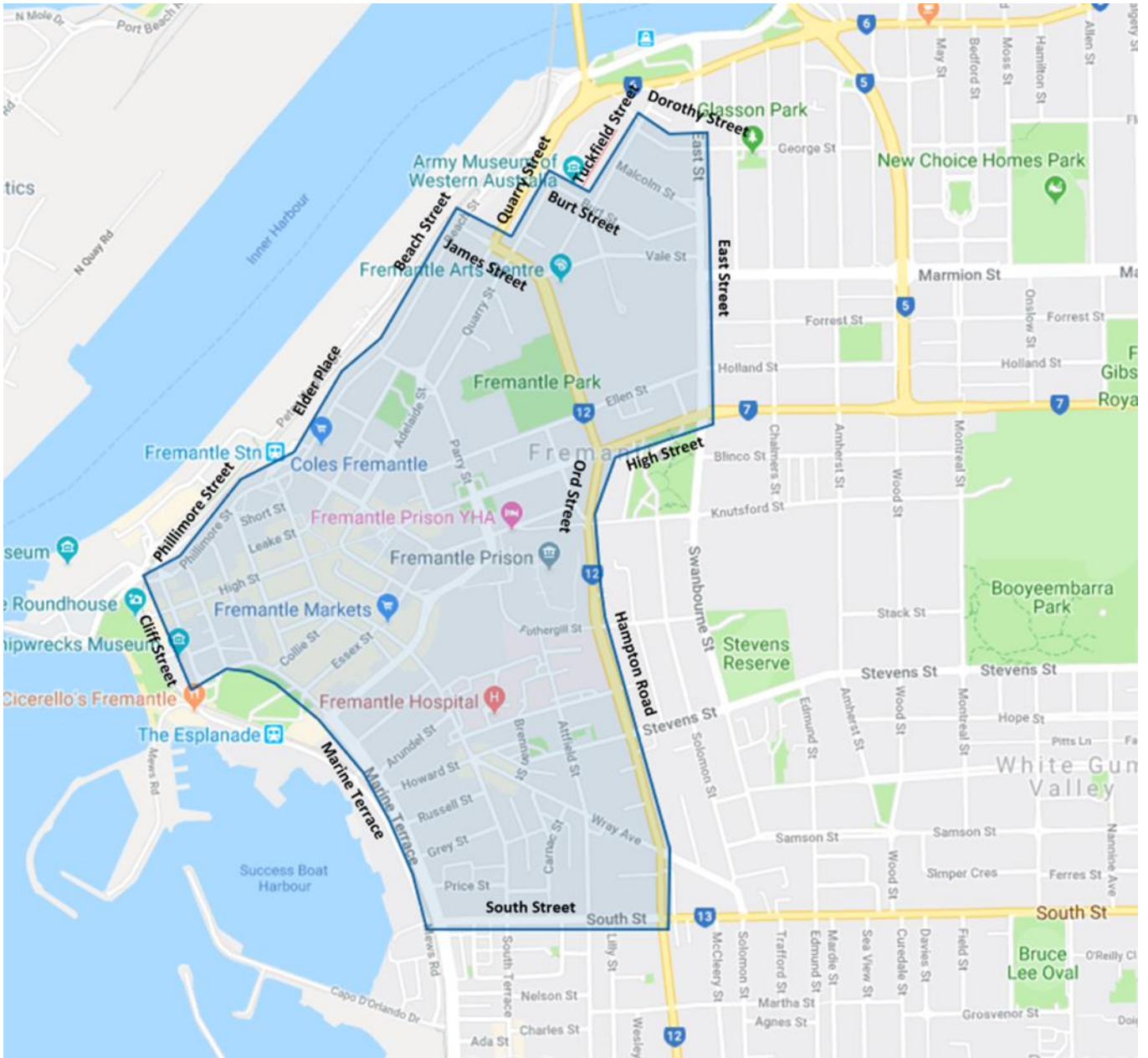
Document Number	Description
D21#508039	Tow Truck Licensing and Permit Requirements Guidelines

Appendix 1 – Central Zones

Perth Central Zone



Fremantle Central Zone



Appendix 2 – Mass Guide for D-Rating Calculations

Vehicle Type	Typical Tare Mass
Prime Mover	8-12t
Semi-Trailer	6-8t
Converter Dolly	2-3t

Note: If unsure, use a lesser tare mass for a more conservative result.



Statutory:	12t	16.5t	20t
Concessional:	12t	17.5t	23.5t



Statutory:	12t	16.5t	20t	20t
Concessional:	12t	17.5t	23.5t	23.5t



Statutory:	7.1t	16.5t	20t	20t	20t
Concessional:	7.1t	17.5t	23.5t	23.5t	23.5t

Note: If unsure, use a higher axle group mass for a more conservative result.