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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**1987 No. 1327**

**ROAD TRAFFIC**

**The Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of  
Special Types) (Amendment) Order 1987**

*Made* - - - - - *24th July 1987*

*Coming into force* - - - - - *1st January 1988*

The Secretary of State for Transport, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 42 of the Road Traffic Act 1972<sup>(1)</sup>, and now vested in him<sup>(2)</sup>, and of all other enabling powers, hereby makes the following Order:

1. This Order may be cited as the Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (Amendment) Order 1987 and shall come into force on 1st January 1988.

2. The Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) General Order 1979<sup>(3)</sup> shall be further amended so as to have effect in accordance with the following provisions of this Order.

3. In article 3:

(a) in the definition of “abnormal indivisible load” for sub-paragraph (b)(ii)(A) and (b)(ii)(B) there shall be substituted:

“(A) prior to 1st January 1988, 32,520 kilograms, and

(B) on or after 1st January 1988, 38,000 kilograms;”;

(b) after the definition of “day” there shall be inserted:

““dual carriageway road” has the same meaning as in Schedule 6 to the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984<sup>(4)</sup>;”

(c) for “special road” and the definition thereof there shall be substituted:

““motorway” has the same meaning as in regulation 3(1) of the Motorways Traffic (England and Wales) Regulations 1982<sup>(5)</sup>, as regards England and Wales, and regulation 2(2) of the Motorways Traffic (Scotland) Regulations 1964<sup>(6)</sup>, as regards Scotland;”.

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(1) 1972 c. 20.

(2) S.I. 1979/571 and 1981/238.

(3) S.I. 1979/1198, amended by S.I. 1981/1664, 1984/1810, 1985/745.

(4) 1984 c. 27.

(5) S.I. 1982/1163.

(6) S.I. 1964/1002.

4. In articles 15(d), 18(1)(b), and 19(3), for the words “4.3 metres” there shall be substituted the words “5 metres”.

5. In article 15(h) and 21(2) for the words “special road” there shall be substituted the word “motorway”.

6. In articles 12(e), 15(k), 15(m)(i) and (ii), 16(2)(d), 16(2)(f)(i) and (ii), 24(2)(a), 25(2), 26(2) and 26(4)(b) for the word “owner” there shall be substituted the word “user”.

7. In article 18, after paragraph (1) there shall be inserted:

(a) “(1A) In this article, “the Construction and Use Regulations” means the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986(7).

(b) For the purposes of paragraph (2) below:

(i) “Category 1” shall consist of any vehicle or combination of vehicles where the total weight of the vehicle or vehicles carrying the load is not more than 46,000 kilograms;

“Category 2” shall consist of any motor vehicle or combination of vehicles where the total weight of the vehicle or vehicles carrying the load is not more than 80,000 kilograms;

“Category 3” shall consist of any motor vehicle or combination of vehicles where the total weight of the vehicle or vehicles carrying the load is not more than 150,000 kilograms;

(ii) a vehicle shall comply with the conditions of an appropriate category, and the category under the conditions of which a vehicle is being used shall be that indicated on the sign mentioned in paragraph (2)(t) below.”.

8. In article 18(2):

(a) in sub-paragraph (c) after the words “heavy motor car” there shall be inserted the words “or a trailer” in both places;

(b) sub-paragraph (e) and the reference thereto in sub-paragraph (f) shall be deleted.

9. In article 18(2), for sub-paragraph (k) there shall be substituted the following:

“(k) the following restrictions on weight shall apply:

(i) for any vehicle or combination of vehicles carrying the load in Category 1:

(a) regulations 75, 76, 78 and 79 of the Construction and Use Regulations shall apply, and in respect of an articulated vehicle, regulation 77 shall apply save for a vehicle to which

(b) below is applicable;

(b) for an articulated vehicle with a total of 5 or more axles and with a relevant axle spacing specified in column 2 of the Table below, the total weight shall not exceed the weight specified for that item in column 3 of the Table.

**Table**

1 Item	2 Relevant axle spacing (in metres)	3 Weight (in kilograms)
1	at least 6.5	40,000
2	at least 7.0	42,000
3	at least 7.5	44,000
4	at least 8.0	46,000

- (ii) for any vehicle or combination of vehicles carrying the load in Category 2:
- (a) the total weight shall be transmitted to the road through at least 5 axles;
  - (b) the total weight imposed on the road by all the wheels of any one axle shall not exceed 12,500 kilograms, and by any one wheel, 6,250 kilograms;
  - (c) if the distance between any two adjacent axles is at least 1.1 metres but less than 1.35 metres, the total weight imposed on the road by all the wheels of any one of those axles shall not exceed 12,000 kilograms, and by any one wheel, 6,000 kilograms;
  - (d) the distance between any two adjacent axles shall not be less than 1.1 metres;
  - (e) where the distance between the foremost and rearmost axles of the vehicle or vehicles carrying the load is at least as specified in an item in column 2 of the Table below, the total weight of the vehicle or combination of vehicles shall not exceed the weight given for that item in column 3 of the Table:

**Table**

1 Item	2 Distance between foremost and rearmost axles (in metres)	3 Weight (in kilograms)
1	5.07	38,000
2	5.33	40,000
3	6.0	45,000
4	6.67	50,000
5	7.33	55,000
6	8.0	60,000
7	8.67	65,000
8	9.33	70,000
9	10.0	75,000
10	10.67	80,000

- (f) where the axles are in two or more groups (so that adjacent axles in each group are less than 2 metres apart and adjacent axles of different groups are more than 2 metres apart), then the total weight imposed on the road by all the wheels of any one group of axles shall not exceed 50,000 kilograms;
- (iii) for any motor vehicle or combination of vehicles carrying the load in Category 3:
- (a) the total weight shall be transmitted to the road through at least 6 axles;
  - (b) the total weight imposed on the road by all the wheels of any one axle shall not exceed 16,500 kilograms, and by any one wheel, 8,250 kilograms;
  - (c) if the distance between any two adjacent axles is at least 1.1 metres but less than 1.35 metres, the total weight imposed on the road by all the wheels of any one of those axles shall not exceed 15,000 kilograms, and by any one wheel 7,500 kilograms;
  - (d) the distance between any two adjacent axles shall not be less than 1.1 metres;
  - (e) where the distance between the foremost and rearmost axles of the vehicle or vehicles carrying the load is at least as specified in an item in column 2 of the Table below the total weight of the vehicle or combination of vehicles shall not exceed the weight given for that item in column 3 of the Table:

**Table**

1 Item	2 Distance between foremost and rearmost axles (in metres)	3 Weight (in kilograms)
1	5.77	80,000
2	6.23	85,000
3	6.68	90,000
4	7.14	95,000
5	7.59	100,000
6	8.05	105,000
7	8.50	110,000
8	8.95	115,000
9	9.41	120,000
10	9.86	125,000
11	10.32	130,000
12	10.77	135,000
13	11.23	140,000
14	11.68	145,000
15	12.14	150,000

- (f) where the axles are in two or more groups (so that adjacent axles in each group are less than 1.5 metres apart and adjacent axles of different groups are more than 1.5 metres apart) then the total weight imposed on the road by all the wheels of any one group of axles shall not exceed 100,000 kilograms, or 90,000 kilograms for a group where the distance between any two adjacent axles of that group is less than 1.35 metres;
- (iv) for the purpose of this sub-paragraph (k):
- “axle” shall mean any number of wheels in line transversely;
- “relevant axle spacing” shall have the same meaning as in regulation 77(1) of the Construction and Use Regulations;
- (v) regulation 3(7) and (8) of the Construction and Use Regulations shall apply to determine the number of wheels and axles for the purpose of this sub-paragraph and regulation 3(10) to determine the distance between axles.”
- 10.** In article 18(2)(1) there shall be substituted for proviso (ii)(a) the following:
- “(a) the vehicle or combination of vehicles is in Category 1 or Category 2;”.
- 11.** In article 18(2)(m) for proviso (iii) there shall be substituted the following:
- “(iii) the vehicle or combination of vehicles is in Category 1 or Category 2;”.
- 12.** In article 18(2)(n), for the words “regulation 75(1)” there shall be substituted the words “regulation 16”.
- 13.** In article 18(2)(p):
- (a) before the initial words “in a case specified...” there shall be inserted the words “for vehicles manufactured before 1st October 1989 and”;
- (b) for the words “items 3 and” there shall be substituted the word “item”;
- (c) for the Table there shall be substituted the following:

**Table**

1 Item	2 Case	3 Regulations that do not apply
1	A heavy motor car	8, 16 in so far as it relates to the requirement in item 18(c) of Schedule 3 to the Regulations, 15, 18 (except paragraph (1)), 22, 24, 45, 63, 75—80, 82, and 83(1)
2	A locomotive or tractor	8, 22, 45, 75(3), and 76
3	A trailer	7, 8, 16 in so far as it relates to the requirements in items 3, 4, 11, 15 and 18 of Schedule 3 to the Regulations, 15, 18 (except paragraph (1)), 21, 22, 24, 63, 64, 75—80, 82, and 83(1)

14. After article 18(2)(p), the following new sub-paragraphs shall be added:

- “(q) in relation to any vehicle or combination of vehicles in a Category specified in column 2 of the Table below and manufactured after 1st October 1989 and any vehicle in Category 1 whenever manufactured, all the Construction and Use Regulations shall apply with the exception of the Regulations which are specified opposite to that item in column 3 of the Table:

**Table**

1 Item	2 Category	3 Regulations that do not apply
1	1	7, 8, 80 and 82.
2	2 and 3	7, 8, 15, 16, 18 (except paragraph (1)), 45, 64, 65, 75—80, 82 and 83(1).

- (r) a vehicle or combination of vehicles in Category 2 or Category 3, if manufactured after 1st October 1989 shall have a braking system complying with the construction, fitting, and performance requirements set out in relation to category N3 motor vehicles and O4 trailers in Annexes I, II and VII to Council Directive [71/320/EEC](#)(8) as amended by [74/132/EEC](#)(9), [75/524/EEC](#)(10) and [79/489/EEC](#)(11) and, if appropriate, Annexes III, IV, V, and VI to the amended Directive, provided that:
- (i) for the purposes of tests conducted in accordance with Annex II the laden weight of a vehicle shall be the maximum technically permissible weight specified by the manufacturer for the vehicle speed specified for the test;
  - (ii) the requirements of paragraphs 1.1.4.2, 1.4 and 2.1.3.2 of Annex II shall not apply;
- (s)
- (i) a vehicle in Category 2 or Category 3, if manufactured after 1st October 1988, shall have a plate complying with the specification prescribed in the Road Vehicles (Marking of Special Weights) Regulations 1983(12) except that there need be no indication of any weight in respect of a speed not exceeding 12 miles per hour;
  - (ii) the plate fitted in accordance with paragraph (i) above shall be marked clearly with the words: “SPECIAL TYPES USE”;
  - (iii) if a vehicle is made up of several modules, each module may be fitted individually with a plate in accordance with paragraph (i) above, provided that the information required from the plate in relation to the vehicle as a whole can be readily determined from those individual plates;
  - (iv) a vehicle fitted with any plate in accordance with paragraph (i) above shall not be used at a weight in excess of any weight specified on that plate in relation to the speed at which the vehicle is travelling;
  - (v) a vehicle in Category 1 shall not be used at a weight in excess of any weight specified on a plate fitted in accordance with regulation 66 of the Construction

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(8) O.J. L202, 6.9.71, p.37.

(9) O.J. L74, 19.3.74, p.7.

(10) O.J. L326, 8.9.75, p.3.

(11) O.J. L128, 26.5.79, p.2.

(12) S.I. [1983/910](#), amended by S.I. [1987/1326](#).

and Use Regulations in relation to items 6, 7 and 8 in Part I or items 4, 5, and 6 in Part II of Schedule 8 to those Regulations;

- (t) the vehicle or the drawing vehicle in a combination of vehicles shall be fitted with a sign indicating the relevant category and complying with the requirements specified in Schedule 6;
- (u) notwithstanding sub-paragraph (p) above, regulation 7 of the Construction and Use Regulations shall not apply in the case of:
  - (i) an articulated vehicle, or a motor vehicle and a trailer, where the semi trailer or the trailer is constructed such that the major part of the load platform does not extend over or between the wheels and is at a height that is below the height of the top most point of the tyres of those wheels, measured on level ground and with any adjustable suspension at the normal travelling height, and where the height or stability of the load being carried necessitates the use of such a trailer;
  - (ii) a vehicle or combination of vehicles unable to comply with that regulation because of the requirements of sub-paragraphs (k)(ii)(e) or (k)(iii)(e) above;
- (v) notwithstanding sub-paragraph (a) above, a vehicle consisting of two or more modules may, when being used in connection with the carriage of but not at the time carrying an abnormal indivisible load, be disassembled into two or more parts and arranged such that one part carries the others.”

**15.** In article 19:

- (a) at the ends of both paragraph (1) and paragraph (2) in each case there shall be added the following:

“save as provided in paragraph (2A) below,”;

- (b) after paragraph (2) a new paragraph (2A) shall be inserted as follows:

“(2A) In a case where a vehicle or combination of vehicles disregarding the date of its manufacture complies with the conditions specified in article 18(2)(k), (q), (r), (s) and (t), the conditions specified in article 21(1) shall apply as if the use of the vehicle or combination of vehicles was authorised by article 18.”

**16.** In article 19(4):

- (a) for sub-paragraph (a) there shall be substituted the following:

“(a) engineering plant shall be used on a road only:

- (i) for testing or demonstration purposes or delivery on sale;
- (ii) for proceeding to or returning from a manufacturer or repairer for repair or maintenance;
- (iii) for proceeding to or from the site of engineering operations or when actually engaged in such operations;

- (b) engineering plant may carry its own necessary gear and equipment but no other load except;

- (i) engineering plant other than a mobile crane when actually engaged on the construction, maintenance or repair of roads may carry materials which it is specifically designed to treat while being carried on the vehicle or materials which have been excavated and raised from the ground by apparatus on the motor vehicle or trailer, and

- (ii) a mobile crane when actually engaged in engineering operations may lift or transport a load;”

- (b) proviso (i) to sub-paragraph (f) shall be omitted.

**17.** In article 20, for the words “Articles 21(3)” there shall be substituted the words “articles 21(1)”.

**18.** In article 21:

(a) there shall be substituted for paragraph (1) the following:

“(1) A vehicle or combination of vehicles the use of which on roads is authorised by article 18, if of Category 2 or Category 3 as defined in that article, or by article 20, as indicated by an item in column 2 of the Table below, shall not travel at a speed exceeding that specified in column 3 for that item in relation to the type of road used:

**Table**

1 Item	2 Authorisation	3 Speed (mph)		
		Motorway	Dual Carriageway	Other road
1	Article 18 Category 2	40	35	30
2	Article 18 Category 3	30	25	20
3	Article 20	30	25	20”

(b) paragraph (3) shall be omitted.

**19.** In article 24, for paragraph (1) there shall be substituted the following:

“(1) This article applies in the case of a vehicle the use of which on roads otherwise would be authorised by article 15, 18, 19 or 20 where the overall width of the vehicle or, if it is used for carrying a load, where the overall width of the vehicle together with the width of any lateral projection of its load, exceeds 5 metres.”.

**20.** In article 25(1)(f) for the words “76,200 kilograms” there shall be substituted the words “80,000 kilograms”.

**21.** In article 26:

(a) in paragraph (1)(i) for the words “76,200 kilograms” there shall be substituted the words “80,000 kilograms”;

(b) in paragraphs (2)(b), (3), and (4) for the words “six clear days” there shall be substituted the words “five clear days” wherever it occurs.

**22.** In article 28(1) for sub-paragraph (a) there shall be substituted:

“(a) a vehicle (including an articulated vehicle) laden or unladen has a gross weight of more than:

(i) prior to 1st January 1988, 32,520 kilograms;

(ii) on or after 1st January 1988, 38,000 kilograms, and”.

**23.** After Schedule 5, there shall be inserted a new Schedule 6 as follows:



“Schedule 6

Form of Identification Sign

(See Article 18(2)(t))

PART I

1. The sign shall be mounted in a clearly visible position on the front of the vehicle, facing forwards, and as near to the vertical plane as practicable.
2. The sign shall be kept clean and unobscured at all times.
3. The sign shall consist of white letters on a black background.
4. The sign shall take the form shown in Part II. Any variation in a dimension specified in Part II shall be treated as permitted for the purposes of this Order if the variation does not exceed 5 per cent of that dimension.

PART II



Note: the category number 3 is shown as an example; the number could be 1, 2 or 3 depending upon the category of the vehicle or combination of vehicles.”.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

24th July 1987

*Peter Bottomley*  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,  
Department of Transport

*Status: This is the original version (as it was originally made). This item of legislation is currently only available in its original format.*

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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Order)*

This Order amends the Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) General Order 1979 (“the principal Order”) as follows:—

(1) The definition of “abnormal indivisible load” is amended to provide a higher weight threshold (article 3).

(2) Throughout the principal Order, the references to “special road” are replaced by references to “motorway” (which is defined) and references to the “owner” of a vehicle are replaced by references to the “user”.

(3) Motor vehicles and combinations authorised under article 18 of the principal Order are classified into Categories 1, 2 or 3 according to weight (article 7).

(4) A restriction on the width of a semi-trailer that is dependent upon the weight of the articulated vehicle is removed from article 18(2) of the principal Order (article 8).

(5) Revised conditions on weights are introduced for vehicles being used under article 18 of the principal Order, these conditions being dependent upon the vehicle category. They include maximum weight for vehicles, axles, and wheels and requirements for spacing between axles and groups of axles (article 9).

(6) Vehicles being used under article 18 of the principal Order are exempt from certain requirements of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986. Revised exemptions for vehicles in Categories 1, 2 and 3 manufactured after 1st October 1989 are introduced. New requirements for braking systems on Category 2 and 3 vehicles are introduced (article 14).

(7) Article 14 introduces a new condition that vehicles authorised for use by article 18 of the principal Order if manufactured after 1st October 1988, are fitted with a plate. This plate must show details of the maximum weights at which the vehicle may be used in relation to the speeds at which it is allowed to travel.

(8) A condition is introduced by article 14 that a vehicle authorised for use by article 18 of the principal Order shall carry identification signs at the front and the rear.

(9) Revised speed limits are introduced into article 21 of the principal Order by article 18 for vehicles authorised for use by article 18 or 20 of the principal Order. Category 1 vehicles are not subject to these limits.

(10) The requirements for notification of movements to the police in article 25 of the principal Order are amended by article 20 to apply to vehicles authorised for use by article 18 or 19 of the principal Order, replacing the reference to a total weight of more than 76,200 kg by a reference to a total weight of more than 80,000 kg.

(11) The conditions in article 26 of the principal Order are amended so that as regards vehicles authorised for use by article 18 or 19 of it, two days advance notice must be given in respect of vehicles or combinations not exceeding 80,000 kg, and 5 days in respect of vehicles and combinations exceeding 80,000 kg. (article 21).

(12) Provision is made in article 15 for the use of engineering plant, authorised for use by article 19 of the principal Order, which complies with the revised conditions in order to entitle it to travel at higher speeds.

(13) The requirements of article 28 of the principal Order in respect of vehicles, authorised for use by article 5(2), 6, 11, 15, 16, 18 or 19 of the principal Order, which have broken down on bridges, are amended to reflect the change in the definition of “abnormal indivisible load” (article 22).

(14) The requirements of article 24 of the principal Order are amended so that as regards vehicles authorised by article 15, 18, 19 or 20 of it, approval is required if the width exceeds 5 metres (article 4 and 19).