
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1991 No. 2125

ROAD TRAFFIC

**The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use)
(Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 1991**

Made - - - - 20th September 1991
Laid before Parliament 26th September 1991
Coming into force - - 17th October 1991

The Secretary of State for Transport, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 41 of the Road Traffic Act 1988(1) as read with section 43 of that Act and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with representative organisations in accordance with section 195(2) of that Act, hereby makes the following Regulations:—

Citation and Commencement

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 1991 and shall come into force on 17th October 1991.

Preliminary

2. The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986(2) shall be further amended as follows.

Vehicle Length

3.—(1) Regulation 3(2) shall be amended as follows.

(2) In the definition of “overall length” in the Table, the word “or” immediately following sub-paragraph (m) shall be omitted, and after sub-paragraph (n) there shall be added the following words:—

“or

(o) any rearward projecting buffer made of rubber or other resilient material.”

4.—(1) Regulation 7 shall be amended as follows.

(1) 1988 c. 52.
(2) S.I.1986/1078; relevant amending instruments are S.I. 1990/317 and 1163.

(2) In the Table in paragraph (1)—

(a) for the entry in column 2 of item 1, there shall be substituted the following entry—

“A motor vehicle drawing one trailer, where the combination of vehicles does not meet the requirements of paragraph (5A) and the trailer is not a semi-trailer.”; and

(b) after item 1 there shall be inserted the following item—

“1A	A motor vehicle drawing one trailer where the combination meets the requirements of paragraph (5A) and the trailer is not a semi-trailer.	18.35”
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(3) In paragraph (2), there shall be added at the end the words “and item 1A in the Table does not apply”.

(4) In paragraph (3), after “1” there shall be inserted “,1A”.

(5) After paragraph (5), there shall be inserted the following paragraph—

“(5A) The requirements of this paragraph, in relation to a combination of vehicles, are that at least one of the vehicles in the combination is not a goods vehicle or, if both vehicles in the combination are goods vehicles that—

(a) the maximum distance measured parallel to the longitudinal axis of the combination of vehicles from the foremost point of the loading area behind the driver’s cab to the rear of the trailer, less the distance between the rear of the motor vehicle and the front of the trailer, does not exceed 15.65m; and

(b) the maximum distance measured parallel to the longitudinal axis of the combination of vehicles from the foremost point of the loading area behind the driver’s cab to the rear of the trailer does not exceed 16m;

but sub-paragraph (a) shall not apply if both vehicles in the combination are car transporters.”

(6) After paragraph (6), there shall be inserted the following paragraph—

“(6A) For the purposes of paragraph (5A)—

(a) where the forward end of the loading area of a motor vehicle is bounded by a wall, the thickness of the wall shall be regarded as part of the loading area; and

(b) any part of a vehicle designed primarily for use as a means of attaching another vehicle to it and any fitting designed for use in connection with any such part shall be disregarded in determining the distance between the rear of a motor vehicle and the front of a trailer being drawn by it.”

(7) In paragraph (7), for the words from “the transverse plane” in the second place they occur to the end of the paragraph there shall be substituted the words “the rear of the semi-trailer”.

(8) After paragraph (7A), there shall be inserted the following paragraph—

“(7B) For the purposes of paragraphs (5A), (6) and (7)—

(a) a reference to the front of a vehicle is a reference to the transverse plane passing through the extreme forward projecting points of the vehicle; and

(b) a reference to the rear of a vehicle is a reference to the transverse plane passing through the extreme rearward projecting points of the vehicle,

inclusive (in each case) of all parts of the vehicle, of any receptacle which is of a permanent character and accordingly strong enough for repeated use, and any fitting on, or attached to the vehicle but exclusive of—

- (i) the things set out in sub-paragraph (i) of the definition of “overall length” in the Table in regulation 3(2), and
 - (ii) in the case of a semi-trailer, the things set out in sub-paragraph (ii)(a) of that definition.”
- (9) After paragraph (8) there shall be inserted the following paragraph—
- “(9) No person shall use or cause or permit to be used on a road, a trailer with an overall length exceeding 18.65m unless the requirements of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12 are complied with.”
5. Regulation 7 as amended by these Regulations is set out in the Schedule to these Regulations.
6. In paragraph 1(a) of Schedule 12, after sub-paragraph (i) there shall be inserted the following sub-paragraph—
- “(ia) in a case to which regulation 7(9) applies, the overall length of the trailer,”

Vehicles carrying long or wide loads

7. In regulation 81(d), for the words “rests on” where they appear in sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii) there shall be substituted the words “is borne by”.

8.—(1) Regulation 82 shall be amended as follows.

(2) In paragraph (2)(b)(ii)(A), for the words “paragraph 1” there shall be substituted the words “paragraphs 1 and 5”.

(3) For paragraph (4), there shall be substituted the following paragraph—

“(4) A load shall not be carried so that its weight is borne by a vehicle or vehicles if either—

- (a) the length specified in paragraph (5) exceeds 18.65m; or
- (b) the load is borne by a trailer or trailers and the length specified in paragraph (6) exceeds 25.9m,

unless the conditions specified in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part I of Schedule 12 are complied with.”

(4) In paragraph (5), for the words “load rests on” where they appear in sub-paragraph (a) and (b) there shall be substituted the words “weight of the load is borne by” and for the words “on which the load rests” where they appear in sub-paragraph (c) there shall be substituted the words “which bear the weight of the load”.

9.—(1) In Schedule 12, after paragraph 4 there shall be inserted the following—

“Marking of wide loads

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(a) Subject to sub-paragraph (d), every load carried on a vehicle in circumstances where this paragraph applies shall be fitted on each side and in the prescribed manner, with—

- (i) a prescribed marker in such a position that it is visible from the front of the vehicle, and
- (ii) a prescribed marker in such a position that it is visible from the rear of the vehicle,

(b) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (a)—

- (i) a marker on a side of the load is fitted in the prescribed manner if at least part of it is within 50mm of a longitudinal plane passing through the point on that side of the load which is furthest from the axis of the vehicle; and
 - (ii) a prescribed marker is a marker of the size, shape and colour described in Part II of this Schedule.
- (c) Every marker fitted pursuant to this paragraph shall be kept clean and between sunset and sunrise be illuminated by a lamp which renders it readily visible from a reasonable distance and which is so shielded that its light, except as reflected from the marker, is not visible to other persons using the road.
- (d) If the load does not extend beyond the longitudinal plane passing through the extreme projecting point on one side of the vehicle, it shall not be necessary for a marker to be fitted to the load on that side.”
- (2) In paragraph 3(f) of Schedule 12, for the words “during the hours of darkness” there shall be substituted the words, “between sunset and sunrise”.
- (3) In Part II of Schedule 12, for the words in the heading “(see paragraph 3(a) of this Schedule)” there shall be substituted the words “(see paragraph 3(a) and 5(b) of this Schedule)”.

Parking in Darkness

10. In regulation 101(1), the words “half an hour after” and the words “half an hour before” shall be omitted.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

20th September 1991

Christopher Chope
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
Department of Transport

THE SCHEDULE

Regulation 5

REGULATION 7 OF THE MOTOR VEHICLES (CONSTRUCTION AND USE) REGULATION 1986 AS AMENDED

Length

7.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), the overall length of a vehicle or combination of vehicles of a class specified in an item in column 2 of the Table shall not exceed the maximum length specified in that item in column 3 of the Table, the overall length in the case of a combination of vehicles being calculated in accordance with regulation 81(g) and (h).

TABLE (regulation 7 (1))

1 <i>Item</i>	2 <i>Class of vehicle</i>	3 <i>Maximum length (metres)</i>
	Vehicle combinations	
1	A motor vehicle drawing one trailer, where the combination of vehicles does not meet the requirements of paragraph (5A) and the trailer is not a semi-trailer.	18
1A	A motor vehicle drawing one trailer where the combination meets the requirements of paragraph (5A) and the trailer is not a semi-trailer.	18.35
2	An articulated bus.	18
3	An articulated vehicle the semi-trailer of which does not meet the requirements of paragraph (6) and is not a low loader.	15.5
3A	An articulated vehicle, the semi-trailer of which meets the requirements of paragraph (6) and is not a low loader.	16.5
3B	An articulated vehicle, the semi-trailer of which is a low loader.	18
	Motor vehicles	
4	A wheeled motor vehicle.	12
5	A track-laying motor vehicle.	9.2
	Trailers	

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

1 <i>Item</i>	2 <i>Class of vehicle</i>	3 <i>Maximum length (metres)</i>
6	An agricultural trailed appliance manufactured on or after 1st December 1985.	15
7	A semi-trailer manufactured on or after 1st May 1983 which does not meet the requirements of paragraph (6) and is not a low loader.	12.2
7A	A composite trailer drawn by— (a) a goods vehicle being a motor vehicle having a maximum gross weight exceeding 3500kg; or (b) an agricultural motor vehicle.	14.04
8	A trailer (not being a semi-trailer or composite trailer) with at least 4 wheels which is— (a) drawn by a goods vehicle being a motor vehicle having a maximum gross weight exceeding 3500kg; or (b) an agricultural trailer.	12
9	Any other trailer not being an agricultural trailed appliance or a semi-trailer.	7

(2) In the case of a motor vehicle drawing one trailer where—

- (a) the motor vehicle is a showman's vehicle as defined in paragraph 7 of Schedule 3 to the 1971 Act; and
- (b) the trailer is used primarily as living accommodation by one or more persons and is not also used for the carriage of goods or burden which are not needed for the purpose of such residence in the vehicle,

item 1 in the Table applies with the substitution of 22m for 18m and item 1A in the Table does not apply.

(3) Items 1, 1A, 3, 3A and 3B of the Table do not apply to—

- (a) a vehicle combination which includes a trailer which is constructed and normally used for the conveyance of indivisible loads of exceptional length, or
- (b) a vehicle combination consisting of a broken down vehicle (including an articulated vehicle) being drawn by a motor vehicle in consequence of a breakdown, or
- (c) an articulated vehicle, the semi-trailer of which is a low loader manufactured before 1st April 1991.

- (3A) Items 6, 7, 7A, 8 and 9 of the Table do not apply to—
- (a) a trailer which is constructed and normally used for the conveyance of indivisible loads of exceptional length,
 - (b) a broken down vehicle (including an articulated vehicle) which is being drawn by a motor vehicle in consequence of a breakdown, or
 - (c) a trailer being a drying or mixing plant designed for the production of asphalt or of bituminous or tar macadam and used mainly for the construction, repair or maintenance of roads, or a road planing machine so used.
- (3B) Furthermore item 7 does not apply to—
- (a) a semi-trailer which is a car transporter,
 - (b) a semi-trailer which is normally used on international journeys any part of which takes place outside the United Kingdom.
- (4) Where a motor vehicle is drawing—
- (a) two trailers, then only one of those trailers may exceed an overall length of 7m;
 - (b) three trailers, then none of those trailers shall exceed an overall length of 7m.
- (5) Where a motor vehicle is drawing—
- (a) two or more trailers; or
 - (b) one trailer constructed and normally used for the conveyance of indivisible loads of exceptional length—

then—

- (i) the overall length of that motor vehicle shall not exceed 9.2m; and
- (ii) the overall length of the combination of vehicles, calculated in accordance with regulation 81(g) and (h), shall not exceed 25.9m, unless the conditions specified in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12 have been complied with.

(5A) The requirements of this paragraph, in relation to a combination of vehicles, are that at least one of the vehicles in the combination is not a goods vehicle or, if both vehicles in the combination are goods vehicles that—

- (a) the maximum distance measured parallel to the longitudinal axis of the combination of vehicles from the foremost point of the loading area behind the driver's cab to the rear of the trailer, less the distance between the rear of the motor vehicle and the front of the trailer, does not exceed 15.65m; and
- (b) the maximum distance measured parallel to the longitudinal axis of the combination of vehicles from the foremost point of the loading area behind the driver's cab to the rear of the trailer does not exceed 16m;

but sub-paragraph (a) shall not apply if both vehicles in the combination are car transporters.

- (6) The requirements of this paragraph, in relation to a semi-trailer, are that—
- (a) the longitudinal distance from the axis of the kingpin to the rear of the semi trailer does not exceed—
 - (i) 12.5m in the case of a car transporter, or
 - (ii) 12m in any other case; and
 - (b) no point in the semi-trailer forward of the transverse plane passing through the axis of the king pin is more than—
 - (i) 4.19m from the axis of the king pin, in the case of a car transporter, or
 - (ii) 2.04m from the axis of the king pin, in any other case.

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

(6A) For the purposes of paragraph (5A)—

- (a) where the forward end of the loading area of a motor vehicle is bounded by a wall, the thickness of the wall shall be regarded as part of the loading area; and
- (b) any part of a vehicle designed primarily for use as a means of attaching another vehicle to it and any fitting designed for use in connection with any such part shall be disregarded in determining the distance between the rear of a motor vehicle and the front of a trailer being drawn by it.

(7) For the purpose of paragraph (6) the longitudinal distance from the axis of the king pin to the rear of a semi-trailer is the distance between a transverse plane passing through the axis of the king pin and the rear of the semi-trailer.

(7A) Where a semi-trailer has more than one king-pin or is constructed so that it can be used with a king-pin in different positions, references in this regulation to a distance from the king-pin shall be construed as the distance from the rearmost king-pin or, as the case may be, the rearmost king-pin position.

(7B) For the purposes of paragraphs (5A), (6) and (7)—

- (a) a reference to the front of a vehicle is a reference to the transverse plane passing through the extreme forward projecting points of the vehicle; and
- (b) a reference to the rear of a vehicle is a reference to the transverse plane passing through the extreme rearward projecting points of the vehicle,

inclusive (in each case) of all parts of the vehicle, of any receptacle which is of a permanent character and accordingly strong enough for repeated use, and any fitting on, or attached to the vehicle but exclusive of—

- (i) the things set out in sub-paragraph (i) of the definition of “overall length” in the Table in regulation 3(2), and
- (ii) in the case of a semi-trailer, the things set out in sub-paragraph (ii)(a) of that definition.

(8) Where a broken down articulated vehicle is being towed by a motor vehicle in consequence of a breakdown—

- (a) paragraph (5) shall have effect in relation to the combination of vehicles as if sub-paragraph (b) were omitted, and
- (b) for the purposes of paragraph (4) and of paragraph (5) as so modified, the articulated vehicle shall be regarded as a single trailer.

(9) No person shall use or cause or permit to be used on a road, a trailer with an overall length exceeding 18.65m unless the requirements of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12 are complied with.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

1. These Regulations further amend the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986. The amendments relate to vehicle length, the carriage of long or wide loads and parking in darkness.

Vehicle length

2. Regulation 3 of the 1986 Regulations is amended so that in determining the “overall length” of a vehicle any rearward projecting buffer made of rubber or other resilient material is ignored.

3. Regulation 7 is amended so as to increase in certain circumstances, the maximum permitted overall length of a motor vehicle and a single trailer which do not form an articulated vehicle. The increase is from 18 to 18.35 metres. In so far as this amendment relates to vehicles registered or put into circulation in any Member State of the EEC other than the UK, it is made in consequence of Council Directive [91/60/EEC](#) (OJ No L37, 9.2.91, p.37).

4. The greater permitted length applies if one of the vehicles is not a goods vehicle. It also applies if both vehicles are goods vehicles and—

- (a) the maximum distance from the foremost point to the loading area behind the driver’s cab to the rear of the vehicle, less the distance between the rear of the motor vehicle and the front of the trailer, does not exceed 15.65 metres, and
- (b) the distance from the foremost point to the loading area behind the driver’s cab to the rear of the trailer does not exceed 16 metres.

The condition set out in paragraph (a) above does not apply if both vehicles in the combination are car transporters.

5. The normal overall length restrictions on trailers and combinations of vehicles which include a trailer imposed by regulation 7 are subject to exceptions. A new provision is inserted into regulation 7 which makes it illegal for a trailer with an overall length exceeding 18.65 metres to be used on a road unless the police have been notified in the prescribed manner and an attendant is employed.

6. Regulation 7 as amended is set out in the Schedule to these Regulations.

The carriage of long or wide loads

7. Apart from drafting changes, the amendments to regulation 82 of and Schedule 12 to the 1986 Regulations are as follows.

8. In certain circumstances where a load projects over the front or rear of a vehicle, the police have to be notified before the vehicle can be used on the road and, while the vehicle is being used on a road, an attendant has to be carried. The amendments make a small change to the circumstances in which these requirements apply.

9. A new requirement applies where a load projects more than 305 millimetres on either side of the vehicle or the overall width of a vehicle or if any lateral projection exceeds 2.9 metres. In such a case, the load has to be fitted with markers of a prescribed type and in a prescribed manner.

Parking in darkness

10. Regulation 101(1) made it an offence for a person, other than with the permission of a police officer, to cause or permit any motor vehicle to stand on a road at any time between half an hour after sunset and half an hour before sunrise unless the near side of the vehicle is as close as may be to the edge of the carriageway. The provision will now apply for the whole period between sunset and sunrise.