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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2003 No. 1998**

**The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of  
Special Types) (General) Order 2003**

**PART 1**

**GENERAL**

*Preliminary*

**Citation and commencement**

1.—(1) This Order may be cited as the Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order 2003.

(2) Except as stated in paragraph (3), this Order comes into force on 25th August 2003.

(3) Paragraphs 15 to 18 of Schedule 2 come into force on 1st December 2004.

**Revocation**

2. The following instruments are revoked—

- (a) Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) General Order 1979(1);
- (b) Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (Amendment) Order 1984(2);
- (c) Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (Amendment) Order 1986(3);
- (d) Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (Amendment) Order 1987(4);
- (e) Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (Amendment) (No 2) Order 1987(5);
- (f) Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (Amendment) Order 1989(6);
- (g) Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (Amendment) Order 1995(7);
- (h) Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (Amendment) Order 1998(8);
- (i) Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (Amendment) (No 2) Order 1998(9).

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- (1) S.I. 1979/1198.
  - (2) S.I. 1984/1810.
  - (3) S.I. 1986/313.
  - (4) S.I. 1987/1327.
  - (5) S.I. 1987/2161.
  - (6) S.I. 1989/1662.
  - (7) S.I. 1995/3052.
  - (8) S.I. 1998/2249.
  - (9) S.I. 1998/2884.

*Interpretation***Interpretation: general****3.—(1) In this Order—**

“abnormal indivisible load” has the meaning given in paragraph 2 of Schedule 1 to this Order;  
 “abnormal indivisible load vehicle” has the meaning given in paragraph 3 of Schedule 1 to this Order;

“agricultural motor vehicle”, “agricultural trailer” and “agricultural trailed appliance” have the meaning given in article 19(3);

“AILV” has the meaning given in Schedule 1;

“articulated vehicle” has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations;

“authorisation requirements” has the meaning given in article 9(2);

“axle” has the meaning given in article 7(1);

“axle weight” has the meaning given in article 7(1);

“the Authorised Weight Regulations” means the Road Vehicles (Authorised Weight) Regulations 1998<sup>(10)</sup>;

“chief officer of police”—

(a) in relation to England and Wales, has the same meaning as in the Police Act 1996<sup>(11)</sup>; and

(b) in relation to Scotland, has the same meaning as in the Police (Scotland) Act 1967<sup>(12)</sup>;

“the Construction and Use Regulations” means the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986<sup>(13)</sup>;

“engineering plant” has the meaning given in paragraph 2 of Schedule 3 to this Order;

“foremost point”, in relation to a vehicle, has the meaning given in article 4(3);

“forward projection”, in relation to a load carried on a vehicle, has the meaning given in article 6(1);

“gross weight”—

(a) in relation to a motor vehicle, means the sum of the weights transmitted to the road surface by all the wheels of the vehicle; and

(b) in relation to a trailer, means the sum of—

(i) the weights transmitted to the road surface by all the wheels of the trailer; and

(ii) any weight of the trailer imposed on the towing vehicle;

“group of axles” has the meaning given in article 7(1);

“lateral projection”, in relation to a load carried on a vehicle, has the meaning given in article 5(1);

“the Lighting Regulations” means the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989<sup>(14)</sup>;

“local excavation vehicle” has the meaning given in paragraph 1 of Schedule 10 to this Order;

“mobile crane” has the meaning given in paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 to this Order;

<sup>(10)</sup> S.I. 1998/3111.

<sup>(11)</sup> 1986 c. 16.

<sup>(12)</sup> 1967 c. 77.

<sup>(13)</sup> S.I. 1986/1078.

<sup>(14)</sup> S.I. 1989/1796.

“motor vehicle of category N3” means a motor vehicle of category N3 (motor vehicles over 12,000 kilograms maximum weight), as defined in Annex II of Council Directive [70/156/EEC](#) on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the type-approval of motor vehicles and their trailers<sup>(15)</sup>;

“motorway” means a special road which—

- (a) in England or Wales (except as otherwise provided by or under regulations made under, or having effect as if made under, section 17 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984<sup>(16)</sup>) can be used by traffic only of Class I or II as specified in Schedule 4 to Highways Act 1980<sup>(17)</sup>; or
- (b) in Scotland can be used by traffic only of Class I or Class II as specified in Schedule 3 to the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984<sup>(18)</sup>;

“overall length”, in relation to a vehicle, has the meaning given in article 4(2);

“overall width”, in relation to a vehicle, has the meaning given in article 4(1);

“Part 2 vehicle” has the meaning given in article 10(2);

“Part 2 vehicle-combination” has the meaning given in article 10(3);

“pneumatic tyre” has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations;

“rearmost point”, in relation to a vehicle, has the meaning given in article 4(4);

“rearward projection”, in relation to a load carried on a vehicle, has the meaning given in article 6(2);

“recognised category of special vehicles” has the meaning given in article 8(2);

“road recovery vehicle” has the meaning given in paragraph 1 of Schedule 4 to this Order;

“special type agricultural vehicle” has the meaning given in article 19(2);

“track-laying”, in relation to a vehicle, has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations;

“trailer of category O4” means a trailer of category O4 (trailers over 10,000 kilograms maximum weight), as defined in Annex II of Council Directive [70/156/EEC](#) on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the type-approval of motor vehicles and their trailers;

“vehicle-combination” means a motor vehicle towing one or more trailers, any trailer or trailers towed by it and any other motor vehicle used for the purpose of assisting the propulsion of the trailer or trailers on the road;

“warning beacon” has the same meaning as in the Lighting Regulations;

“wheel” is to be construed in accordance with article 7(2) and (3);

“wheeled”, in relation to a vehicle, means a vehicle so constructed that the whole weight of the vehicle is transmitted to the road surface by means of wheels;

“wheel-track combination vehicle” has the meaning given in paragraph 1 of Schedule 3; and

“wheel weight” has the meaning given in article 7(1).

(2) In this Order, any reference to a motor vehicle towing a trailer in an offset manner is a reference to the vehicle towing the trailer so that the longitudinal axis of the trailer and the longitudinal axis of the towing vehicle are parallel but lie in different vertical planes.

(15) OJ No. L 42, 23.2.1970, p. 1. Annex II of the Directive was substituted by Directive [92/5053/EC](#).

(16) 1984 c. 27. Section 17 was amended by the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, Schedule 8, paragraph 28 and Schedule 9 and by the Road Traffic Act 1991, Schedule 4, paragraph 25 and Schedule 8.

(17) 1980 c. 66.

(18) 1984 c. 54.

(3) For the purposes of any provision of this Order requiring a person to do something within a specified number of days, no account is to be taken of any day which is a Saturday, a Sunday or a public holiday in any part of Great Britain.

#### **Interpretation: vehicles and their measurement**

4.—(1) In this Order “overall width”, in relation to any vehicle, has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.

(2) In this Order “overall length”—

- (a) in relation to a single vehicle, has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations;
- (b) in relation to a vehicle-combination, means the distance between the foremost point of the towing vehicle and the rearmost point of the rearmost vehicle, measured when the longitudinal axis of each vehicle in the combination lies in the same vertical plane.

(3) In this Order “foremost point”, in relation to any vehicle, means the foremost point from which its overall length is calculated when applying the definition of overall length contained in regulation 3(2) of the Construction and Use Regulations.

(4) In this Order “rearmost point”, in relation to any vehicle, means the rearmost point from which its overall length is calculated when applying the definition of overall length contained in regulation 3(2) of the Construction and Use Regulations.

(5) In this Order—

- (a) any reference to the distance between vehicles bearing the weight of a load is a reference to the distance between the nearest points of any two adjacent vehicles by which each load is carried, measured when the longitudinal axis of each vehicle lies in the same vertical plane; and
- (b) in determining the nearest point of two vehicles, any part of either vehicle designed primarily for use as a means of attaching the one vehicle to the other (and any fitting designed for use in connection with any such part) is to be disregarded.

#### **Interpretation: lateral projections of loads and their measurement**

5.—(1) In this Order “lateral projection”, in relation to a load carried on a vehicle, means that part of the load which extends beyond a side of the vehicle.

(2) For the purposes of this Order, the width of any lateral projection is to be measured between longitudinal planes passing through the extreme projecting point of the vehicle on that side of the vehicle on which the projection lies and that part of the projection furthest from that point.

(3) The reference in paragraph (2) to the extreme projecting point of a vehicle is to the point of the vehicle from which its overall width is calculated when applying the definition of overall width contained in regulation 3(2) of the Construction and Use Regulations.

#### **Interpretation: forward or rearward projections of loads and their measurement**

6.—(1) In this Order “forward projection”, in relation to a load carried on a vehicle, means—

- (a) where the weight of the load is carried on a single vehicle, that part of the load that extends beyond the foremost point of the vehicle;
- (b) where the weight of the load is carried on more than one vehicle, that part of the load that extends beyond the foremost point of the foremost vehicle on which the load is carried.

(2) In this Order “rearward projection”, in relation to a load carried on a vehicle, means—

- (a) where the weight of the load is carried on a single vehicle, that part of the load that extends beyond the rearmost point of the vehicle;
  - (b) where the weight of the load is carried on more than one vehicle, that part of the load that extends beyond the rearmost point of the rearmost vehicle on which the load is carried.
- (3) For the purposes of paragraphs (1) and (2), where a crane or other special appliance or apparatus is fitted to a vehicle so as to constitute a permanent (or essentially permanent) feature of it—
- (a) any part of that crane, appliance or apparatus that extends forwards beyond the foremost point of the vehicle (or, as the case may be, beyond the foremost point of the foremost vehicle by which its weight is carried) is to be treated as a forward projection; and
  - (b) any part of that crane, appliance or apparatus that extends rearwards beyond the rearmost point of the vehicle (or, as the case may be, beyond the rearmost point of the rearmost vehicle by which its weight is carried) is to be treated as a rearward projection.
- (4) In determining the foremost or rearmost point of a vehicle, any part of a crane or other special appliance or apparatus is to be disregarded.
- (5) For the purposes of this Order, the length of any forward projection or rearward projection is to be measured between transverse planes passing—
- (a) in the case of a forward projection, through the foremost point of the vehicle and that part of the projection furthest from that point;
  - (b) in the case of a rearward projection, through the rearmost point of the vehicle and that part of the projection furthest from that point.

### **Interpretation: axles, wheels, axle weights and wheel weights**

7.—(1) In this Order—

“axle” means any number of wheels in a transverse line;

“axle weight” means the sum of the weights transmitted to the road surface by all the wheels of any one axle;

“group of axles” means a group of two or more axles that are so linked together that the load applied to one axle is applied to the other; and

“wheel weight” means the weight transmitted to the road surface by any one wheel of an axle.

(2) For the purposes of this Order, any reference to a wheel of a vehicle is a reference to a wheel, the tyre or rim of which is, when the vehicle is in motion on a road, in contact with the ground.

(3) For the purposes of this Order, any two wheels of a vehicle are to be treated as one wheel if their centres of contact with the road are less than 460 millimetres apart.

(4) For the purposes of this Order, any wheels, or lines of wheels, whose centres can be contained between two transverse lines less than 0.5 metre apart are to be treated as one axle.

(5) For the purposes of this Order, the distance between any two axles of a vehicle or vehicle-combination is to be taken as the shortest distance between the line joining the centres of the areas of contact with the road surface of the wheels of one axle and the line joining the centres of the areas of contact with the road surface of the wheels of the other axle.

### *Authorisation of certain vehicles for use on roads*

### **Application of this Order**

8.—(1) This Order applies only to motor vehicles or trailers—

- (a) that do not comply in all respects with the standard construction and use requirements; and
- (b) that fall within a recognised category of special vehicles.

(2) In this Order “recognised category of special vehicles” means a description of vehicles that is stated by a provision of this Order to be a recognised category of special vehicles.

(3) In paragraph (1), “standard construction and use requirements”, in relation to a motor vehicle or trailer, means the requirements of such of the regulations made under section 41 of the Road Traffic Act 1988<sup>(19)</sup> as would, apart from this Order, apply to that motor vehicle or trailer.

#### **Authorisation of particular vehicles falling within recognised category of special vehicles**

9.—(1) A vehicle that falls within a recognised category of special vehicles is authorised to be used on roads by virtue of this Order if (but only if) it complies with the authorisation requirements applicable to vehicles in that category.

(2) In this Order “authorisation requirements”, in relation to a recognised category of special vehicles—

- (a) means all the requirements specified in this Order as being applicable to vehicles in that category; and
- (b) includes such of the requirements of regulations made under section 41 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as are specified in this Order as being applicable to vehicles in that category (subject to any modifications or exceptions so specified).

(3) Where any provision of this Order specifies any of the regulations mentioned in paragraph (2) (b) as being applicable to any recognised category of special vehicles, that provision is not to be construed as applying any requirement of those regulations to a vehicle in that category if that requirement may reasonably be regarded, in all the circumstances, as not relevant to the vehicle in question (for example, if the requirement relates to trailers and the vehicle in question is not a trailer).

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(19) 1988 c. 52.