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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2023 No. 524**

**ROAD TRAFFIC**

**The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) (Amendment) Order 2023**

<i>Made</i>	- - - -	<i>2nd May 2023</i>
<i>Laid before Parliament</i>		<i>10th May 2023</i>
<i>Coming into force</i>	- -	<i>31st May 2023</i>

The Secretary of State makes the following order in exercise of the powers conferred by section 44(1) (a) and (c) and section 44(2) of the Road Traffic Act 1988(1)

**Citation, commencement and extent**

1.—(1) This Order may be cited as the Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) (Amendment) Order 2023 and comes into force on 31st May 2023.

(2) This order extends to England and Wales and Scotland.

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

2. The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order 2003(2) is amended as follows.

**Amendments of Article 3 and Part 5 relating to longer semi-trailers**

3. In article 3(1) (“interpretation: general”)—

(a) after the definition of “local excavation vehicle”, insert—

““longer semi-trailer” means a semi-trailer, (other than an abnormal indivisible load vehicle, a low loader or a stepframe low loader), in respect of which the longitudinal distance from the axis of the king pin to the rear of the trailer exceeds—

(a) 12.5 metres, in the case of a car transporter, or

(b) 12 metres, in any other case

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(1) 1988 c. 52. Section 44 was amended by section 48 of the Road Traffic Act 1991 (c. 48), referring to paragraph 51 of Schedule 4 to that Act.  
(2) S.I. 2003/1998.

(but a semi-trailer which is capable of extension is only a longer semi-trailer when extended so that it exceeds the above distances);

“low loader” has the same meaning as in regulation 3(2) of the Construction and Use Regulations;(3)

(b) after the definition of “motorway”, insert—

““operator” means—

- (a) a person who holds an operator’s licence in respect of a longer semi-trailer under section 2 of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995(4);
- (b) if there is no such person, the driver of the motor vehicle towing the longer semi-trailer where the towing vehicle belongs to the driver or is in the driver’s possession under an agreement for hire or hire-purchase, or a loan;
- (c) in any other case, the person whose employee or agent the driver of the towing vehicle is;”.

(c) after the definition of “road recovery vehicle”, insert—

““semi-trailer” has the same meaning as in regulation 3 of the Construction and Use Regulations(5)

(d) after the definition of “special type agricultural vehicle”, insert—

““stepframe low loader” has the same meaning as in regulation 3 of the Construction and Use Regulations(6);”.

4. After article 56, insert—

**“Longer semi-trailers**

57.—(1) Longer semi-trailers are a recognised category of special vehicles.

(2) The authorisation requirements applicable to longer semi-trailers are the requirements specified in articles 58 to 62.

**Longer semi-trailers – legislation which applies as authorisation requirements**

58.—(1) This article specifies the legislation that applies to longer semi-trailers as authorisation requirements.

(2) The legislation is—

- (a) the Construction and Use Regulations, apart from regulation 7 (length) and regulation 13A(4)(7) and 13B(6)(8);
- (b) the Authorised Weight Regulations(9);
- (c) the Lighting Regulations(10).

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(3) S.I. 1986/1078. Definition inserted by S.I. 1990/317, regulation 3(1).  
 (4) 1995 c. 23. Section 2 was amended by the Transport Act 2000 (c. 38), section 261(1), the Haulage Permits and Trailer Registration Act 2018 (c. 19), section 11(2), S.I. 2011/2632, paragraph 2 of Schedule 2, S.I. 2019/708, regulation 2(2), and by S.I. 2022/293, regulation 24.  
 (5) Definition inserted into regulation 3 by S.I. 1987/676, regulation 5.  
 (6) Definition inserted into regulation 3 by S.I. 1990/317, regulation 3(1).  
 (7) Regulation 13A was inserted by S.I. 1990/317 and substituted by S.I. 2000/3197.  
 (8) Regulation 13B(6) was inserted by S.I. 1998/1188, regulation 9(3).  
 (9) S.I. 1998/3111.  
 (10) S.I. 1989/1796.

### **Longer semi-trailers – length requirements**

**59.**—(1) The longitudinal distance from the axis of the kingpin to the rear of a longer semi-trailer must not exceed 14.05 metres.

(2) The distance parallel to the longitudinal axis of the longer semi-trailer from the foremost part of the loading area to the rear of the trailer must not exceed 15.65 metres.

(3) The overall length of an articulated vehicle which includes a longer semi-trailer must not exceed 18.55 metres.

### **Longer semi-trailers – other construction requirements**

**60.**—(1) A longer semi-trailer must have a minimum of three axles, one of which must be capable of steering.

(2) Where the maximum authorised weight of a vehicle combination<sup>(11)</sup> determined in accordance with Schedule 2 of the Authorised Weight Regulations exceeds 38000kg and that combination includes a longer semi-trailer, the longer semi-trailer must be equipped with an on-board weighing device.

(3) In paragraph (2), “on-board weighing device” means a device capable of determining either the weight of the longer semi-trailer or its axle weights.

(4) A load carried by a longer semi-trailer must not have a rearward projection.

### **Longer semi-trailers – requirements relating to route plans and risk assessments**

**61.**—(1) Subject to paragraph (8), a longer semi-trailer must not be used on a road otherwise than on an established route.

(2) In this article, “established route” means a route which is specified on a route plan complying with paragraph (3), and for which a risk assessment complying with paragraphs (4) and (5) has been completed.

(3) A route plan must—

(a) be in writing, and

(b) specify the road or roads on which the longer semi-trailer is to be used in order to travel to and from its destination.

(4) A risk assessment must—

(a) be in writing,

(b) make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks of personal injury and injury to any animal, damage to any vehicle and damage to any other property of using the longer semi-trailer on the route specified on the route plan, and

(c) conclude in the light of those risks that the route is one on which it would be reasonably safe to use a longer semi-trailer.

(5) A risk assessment is suitable and sufficient within the meaning of paragraph (4)(b) if it considers all relevant risk factors, including the following—

(a) the width and curvature of the part of the road on which the longer semi-trailer is to be used on the route,

(b) the amount of space that is available at any road junction at which the longer semi-trailer is likely to turn as part of the route, and

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<sup>(11)</sup> Defined in regulation 2 of the Authorised Weight Regulations.

- (c) the likelihood that the presence of other vehicles, pedestrians, horse riders or cyclists on the route will cause difficulties in manoeuvring the longer semi-trailer.
- (6) A copy of the route plan and risk assessment for an established route must be kept by the operator of a longer semi-trailer for a period of two years beginning with the date the longer semi-trailer was last used on that route.
- (7) A copy of the route plan and risk assessment for an established route must be carried in the motor vehicle towing the longer semi-trailer when the longer semi-trailer is used on that route.
- (8) Subject to paragraph (9), a longer semi-trailer may be used on a diversionary route where—
  - (a) the use of a longer semi-trailer on the whole or any part of an established route is prohibited under any enactment other than this order, or
  - (b) the operator reasonably considers that the use of a longer semi-trailer on the whole or any part of an established route is likely to be subject to unreasonable traffic delays because of an accident or other obstruction on that route.
- (9) An operator who becomes aware of a prohibition, accident or other obstruction on an established route as mentioned in paragraph (8) before the longer semi-trailer reaches that route may not use a diversionary route where—
  - (a) it is reasonably practicable to use an alternative established route, or
  - (b) it is reasonably practicable to specify the diversionary route on a route plan, and to complete a risk assessment for it.
- (10) Where paragraph (8)(a) applies, the diversionary route may be used for a period of seven days beginning with the day on which the prohibition on the use of the longer semi-trailer came into force, unless the prohibition is revoked or expires before the end of that period.
- (11) In this article—
  - (a) “diversionary route” means a route which—
    - (i) involves the use of roads or parts of roads which are not on an established route,
    - (ii) enables the longer semi-trailer to reach or return to an established route as soon as reasonably practicable, and
    - (iii) is reasonably considered by the operator to be safe for that purpose;
  - (b) “damage to any other property” means damage to any other property constructed on, fixed to, growing in or otherwise forming part of the land on which the route specified on the route plan is situated or land adjacent to such land;
  - (c) a risk factor is something which increases or reduces a risk mentioned in paragraph (4)(b).

**Longer semi-trailers – notification of operation for monitoring and evaluation purposes**

- 62.—(1) Subject to paragraph (3), before a longer semi-trailer is first used on a road by an operator, the operator must notify the Secretary of State in accordance with paragraph (2) of its intention to use the longer semi-trailer on a road.
- (2) A notification under paragraph (1) must—
    - (a) be made by electronic communication, and
    - (b) specify—

- (i) the name and address of the operator, and
- (ii) if the operator holds an operator's licence in respect of the longer semi-trailer under section 2 of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995, the number of that licence.

(3) A notification by an operator under paragraph (1) is not required where the longer semi-trailer has been in the operator's lawful possession for less than one month.

(4) This article ceases to have effect at the end of the period of five years beginning with the date on which this order comes into force.

### **Longer semi-trailers - application of section 53(1) and (2) of the 1988 Act**

**63.** The provisions of section 53(1) and (2) of the 1988 Act apply to a longer semi-trailer authorised for use on roads by this order, except where the longer semi-trailer is used for a purpose specified by regulation 44(1)(a) to (d) or (f) to (h) of the Goods Vehicles (Plating and Testing) Regulations 1988(12);”.

### **Amendment of Schedule 11 (vehicles for tests, trials or non-UK use etc)**

**5.** In Schedule 11 (vehicles for tests, trials or non-UK use etc), in Table 16, at the end add the following entry—

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<i>Column header</i>	
110	Mobile Telephones

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### **Review**

**6.—(1)** The Secretary of State must—

- (a) carry out a review of the regulatory provisions contained within Article 4, and
- (b) publish a report setting out the conclusions of the review.

(2) The report must be published before the end of the period of five years beginning with the date on which these provisions come into force.

(3) Section 30(4) of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015(13) requires that a report published under this regulation must, in particular—

- (a) set out the objectives intended to be achieved by the regulatory provision referred to in paragraph (1)(a);
- (b) assess the extent to which those objectives are achieved;
- (c) assess whether those objectives remain appropriate;
- (d) if those objectives remain appropriate, assess the extent to which they could be achieved in another way which involves less onerous regulatory provision.

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(12) S.I. 1988/1478. Regulation 44 was amended by S.I. 1990/448, regulations 8 and 9, and by S.I. 2017/849, regulation 13.

(13) 2015 c. 26.

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**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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Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Transport

2nd May 2023

*Richard Holden*  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
Department for Transport

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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

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

This Order amends article 3 (interpretation) and Part 5 (miscellaneous special vehicles) of the Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order 2003 (“the 2003 Order”) to make provision for the use of longer semi-trailers (LSTs) on roads as a special type of vehicle, subject to specified authorisation requirements. It also amends Table 16 of Schedule 11 to the 2003 Order (vehicles for tests, trials or non-UK use etc: Construction and Use regulations that do apply) to include regulation 110 (mobile telephones) in the list of provisions of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (“the 1986 Regulations”) which apply to such vehicles.

Articles 3 and 4 make provision for longer semi-trailers. Article 3 inserts the definition of “longer semi-trailer” into article 3(1) of the 2003 Order. It also inserts definitions of “low loader”, “semi-trailer” and “stepframe low loader” which are needed as a consequence of that definition.

Article 4 inserts new articles 57 to 63 into the 2003 Order. New article 57 provides that LSTs are a recognised category of special vehicle. New articles 58 to 62 specify the authorisation requirements that are applicable to LSTs.

- New article 58 specifies the legislation which applies to LSTs as authorisation requirements.
- New article 59 specifies maximum length requirements for LSTs.
- New article 60 makes provision for various other construction requirements;
- New article 61 makes provision for requirements relating to route plans and risk assessments for LSTs. It provides that, in general, an LST must not be used on a road otherwise than on an established route (paragraph (1)), defined as a route which is specified on a route plan, and for which a risk assessment has been completed (paragraph (2)).
- Paragraphs (3) to (5) specify the requirements for route plans and risk assessments.
- Paragraphs (6) and (7) set out requirements for the keeping of copies of route plans and risk assessment for established routes by operators, and for the carrying of these documents in motor vehicles towing LSTs when they are being used on established routes.
- Paragraph (8) makes an exception to the general rule in paragraph (1). It allows an LST to be used on a diversionary route where (a) its use on the whole or any part of an established route is prohibited by any enactment other than this Order, or (b) the operator reasonably considers that an accident or other obstruction on the established route is likely to make it subject to unreasonable traffic delays.
- This is subject to the restriction in paragraph (9), which provides that where an operator becomes aware of an accident or other obstruction on an established route before the LST reaches that route. In this case an LST must not be used on a diversionary route where it is reasonably practicable either to use an alternative established route, or to specify the diversionary route on a route plan and to complete a risk assessment for it.
- Paragraph (10) limits the period for which an LST may be used on a diversionary route where its use on that route is permitted by paragraph (8)(a).
- New article 62 provides that, before an LST is first used on a road by an operator, the operator must notify the Secretary of State of its intention to use that LST on a road. This is unless the LST has been in the operator’s lawful possession for less than one month. The article ceases to have effect after five years beginning with the date this Order comes into force.

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

- New article 63 provides that the provisions of section 53(1) and (2) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 (obligatory goods vehicle test certificates) apply to LSTs, except where an LST is used for a purpose specified in regulation 44(1)(a) to (d) or (f) to (h) of the Goods Vehicles (Plating and Testing) Regulations 1988.
- Article 5 of this Order amends Table 16 of Schedule 11 to the 2003 Order. Table 16 specifies the provisions of the 1986 Regulations which apply to vehicles for tests, trials and non-UK use etc. Article 5 inserts an entry into Table 16 for regulation 110 (mobile telephones). The effect of this provision will be that the use of mobile telephones or other handheld devices while driving such a vehicle will be prohibited in accordance with that regulation.
- Article 6 requires the Secretary of State to carry out a review of the regulatory provisions contained within article 4, and to publish a report setting out the conclusions of that review. The report must be published before the end of the period of five years beginning with the date on which the provisions come into force.
- A full impact assessment of the effect that this instrument will have on the costs of business, the voluntary sector and the public sector is published with the explanatory memorandum and is available alongside this instrument at [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk), or from the Department for Transport, Great Minster House, 33 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 4DR.