



COUPLING SAFETY PINS



Is It a Legal Requirement to Fit a Pin or Clip to Secure the Trailer Coupling?

This is one of the most common questions we get asked at Borgy's Weigh Me RV, and it's a great one — because the answer isn't always clear unless you know where to look.

In short: yes, it is a legal requirement to secure the latch on your 50mm ball coupling using a secondary locking device.

This means you must use the hole provided in your coupling to insert either a pin, R-clip, lynchpin, or padlock. While a padlock adds theft protection, any form of positive mechanical restraint is compliant for roadworthiness.

Why is this Required?

The purpose of this requirement is to prevent accidental disconnection of the trailer from the tow vehicle.

The primary locking mechanism is the latch that clamps over the tow ball. However, regulations require a secondary device to ensure this latch cannot open unintentionally due to vibrations, bumps, or wear.

If you are pulled over for a roadside inspection or are involved in an incident, not having a secondary locking device fitted can result in fines, a defect notice, or even liability in the case of an accident.

The Official Rule:

The Australian Design Rules (ADR) and the Vehicle Standards Bulletin VSB1 — Building Small Trailers (up to 4.5 tonnes ATM) clearly state:

Section 5.3 Coupling Attachment:

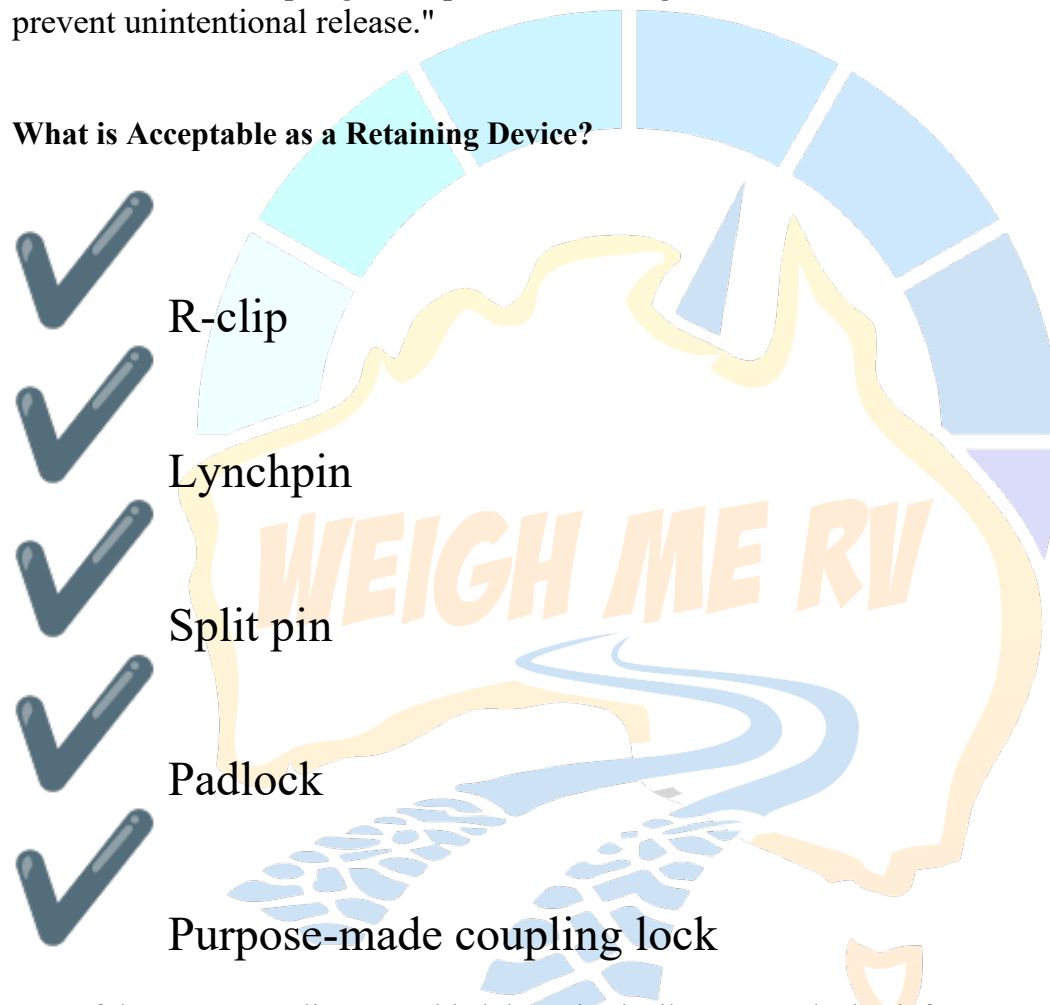
"The coupling must have a positive locking mechanism and a secondary locking device to ensure the primary locking mechanism remains secure."

This is a mandatory requirement across all Australian states and territories, including NSW.

Further support for this requirement is found in the NHVR National Heavy Vehicle Inspection Manual, Section G — Towing Couplings, which confirms:

"Check that the coupling has a positive latching mechanism with a retaining device to prevent unintentional release."

What is Acceptable as a Retaining Device?



Any of these are compliant, provided they physically prevent the latch from opening while in use.

Summary:

Yes, it is legally required to secure your coupling latch.

The hole in your 50mm coupling is there for a reason — it must be used.

You can use a pin, clip, or padlock.

This helps prevent accidents, avoids defect notices, and ensures you are complying with Australian road rules.

We always recommend you double-check this before each trip as part of your pre-departure checklist.

If you're ever in doubt, feel free to reach out to us at Borgy's Weigh Me RV! We're here to help you stay safe and legal on the road.

Contact Us:

www.weighmerv.com.au

Phone: 0420 364 066

Email: borgy@weighmerv.com.au

