

Tasmanian Class I Heavy Vehicle
Pilot & Escort Vehicle Guidelines

Pilot Vehicle Guidelines



Department of State Growth



Tasmanian Class I Heavy Vehicle Pilot and Escort Guidelines

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1. Introduction

This guideline provides an overview of the operational requirements, additional specifications and conditions for pilot and escort vehicles and drivers accompanying oversize heavy vehicle movements in Tasmania.

This guideline is an accompanying document to the following NHVR exemption notices which provide the legal instrument for access under notice on the Tasmanian road network, along with associated web-maps which provide minimum requirements for pilot and escort vehicles for specific loads on specific roads

- *Tasmanian Class 1 Load Carrying Vehicles Mass and Dimension Exemption [Notice](#)* (Tasmanian LCV Notice) & [map](#)
- *Tasmanian Class 1 Special Purpose Vehicle Exemption [Notice](#)* (Tasmanian SPV Notice) & [map](#),
- *National Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle and Combination Mass and Dimension Exemption [Notice](#)* (National Agricultural Vehicle Notice) & [map](#)

2. What is a pilot or escort vehicle?

The Heavy Vehicle National Law ([HVNL](#)) provides definitions for Pilot and Escort Vehicles.

- **Pilot Vehicle** – *A motor vehicle that accompanies an oversize vehicle to warn other road users of the oversize vehicle's presence.*
- **Escort Vehicle** – *A pilot vehicle that is driven by a police officer or another person authorised to direct traffic under an Australian road law.*

The purpose of Pilot and Escort vehicles is primarily to warn to other road users of the presence of the Oversize Load, SPV or Agricultural Vehicle. In the case of an Escort Vehicle, the driver's role is to provide warning of the presence of the Oversize vehicle and additionally to direct traffic to enable the safe and efficient movement of the escorted vehicle.

3. Pilot and Escort Vehicle Eligibility

Pilot and escort vehicles are required to comply with the requirements set out in [Schedule 8](#) of the *Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimensions and Loading) National Regulations* (the regulations).

In some instances where noted, different requirements are set through individual notices.

3.1 Pilot vehicle requirements

Schedule 8 (Part 1, Division 5) of the regulations requires that a pilot vehicle must:

- Have at least 4 wheels and a GVM not exceeding 4.5 tonnes if only one pilot vehicle is required. If 2 pilot vehicles are required, the rear pilot vehicle may have a GVM not exceeding 6.5 tonnes. - [s26](#)

- Exception:* A pilot vehicle accompanying an eligible SPV operating under the *Tasmanian SPV exemption* [Notice](#) may have a GVM not exceeding 22.5 tonnes. - [s16 of Notice](#)
- Have a vertical rigid yellow retro-reflective dual faced warning sign on its roof with black lettering stating, “OVERSIZE LOAD AHEAD” (see figure 8). The sign must not be displayed when not operating as a Pilot Vehicle - [s26](#)
 - Display low-beam headlights on while travelling in the daytime - [s28](#)
 - Not tow a trailer, or carry a load except for any tools, equipment or substances for use in connection with the oversize vehicle that it is accompanying or for restraining the load on the oversize vehicle. - [s29](#)
 - Have a device that always allows effective communication between the drivers of the pilot vehicle and the oversize or special purpose vehicle; however, this is not required for agricultural machines. - [s31](#)
 - Have a yellow rotating light on the highest practical point of the vehicle that it (or a second supplementary light) can be seen from 500 metres in all directions. - [s36](#)

3.2 Escort vehicle requirements

Schedule 8 (Part 1, Division 5) of the regulations requires that an escort vehicle must meet the requirements of a Pilot Vehicle as mentioned above in section 3.1 with exception to:

- Requirement to display a “OVERSIZE LOAD AHEAD” warning sign; and - [s35](#)
- If the vehicle is a Police or Transport Enforcement vehicle it may display coloured light/s other than amber; and
- The requirements don’t apply to an escort vehicle that is a motorcycle driven by a Police Officer in the course of their duties.

3.3 Warning light requirements

Schedule 8 (Part 3, Division 1) of the regulations prescribes requirements about warning lights:

- Warning light/s on a pilot vehicle must emit a rotating / flashing yellow coloured light which flashes between 120 & 200 times per minute and have a power of at least 24w if LED technology is used, or 55 watts for other lighting. The light is not to be a strobe light. - [s35](#)
- The warning light on a pilot vehicle is to be positioned above or below the Oversize Load Ahead sign, or at each side of the sign so that it is clearly visible at 500 m in all directions. - [s36](#)
However, if the warning light/s are fitted to a pilot vehicle travelling in front of the oversize vehicle/SPV a filter may be positioned behind the light to prevent dazzling the driver of the oversize vehicle.
- The warning light/s must only be on whilst the vehicle is piloting an oversize vehicle/SPV and must be able to be switched on and off by the driver from the normal driving position. - [s37](#)
- [s38](#)

3.4 Warning Sign Requirements

Schedule 8 (Part 3, Division 2) of the regulations prescribes requirements about warning signs:

- Warning signs must be kept clean and un-obscured so they can be read by other road users. - [s42](#)
- The sign must be constructed of material appropriate for the intended use, have the manufacturers name or trademark and the brand and class of materials used clearly marked on the face of the sign. - [s41](#)
- A warning sign on a pilot vehicle must be at least 1200 millimetres long and at least 600 millimetres high, the sign may have bottom corner cut-outs not more than 150 millimetres wide and not more than 100 millimetres high if they are needed for mounting the warning lights. - [s49](#)
- Both faces of a warning sign on a pilot vehicle (see figure 1) must display:
 - the word **OVERSIZE**, in black upper-case lettering at least 200 millimetres high
 - the words **LOAD AHEAD**, in black upper-case lettering at least 100 millimetres high
 - The bottom of the lettering of the word **OVERSIZE** must be at least 300 millimetres from the bottom of the sign
 - The bottom of the lettering of the words **LOAD AHEAD** must be at least 100 millimetres from the bottom of the sign.

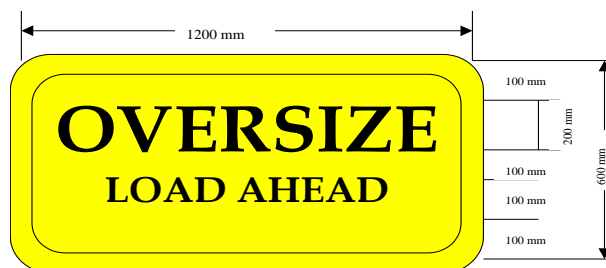


Figure 1: example of a warning sign for a pilot vehicle

- A warning sign on a pilot vehicle must not lean back so that there is more than 200 millimetres measured horizontally from the top of the sign to a vertical line running through the bottom of the sign (see figure 2). - [s51](#)
- **NOTE:** It is an offence to display an OVERSIZE LOAD AHEAD sign when not piloting.

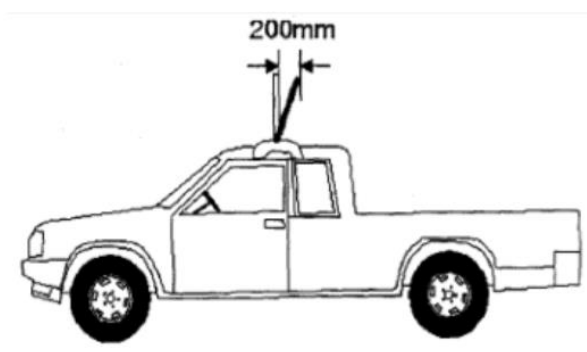


Figure 2: maximum tilt of a warning sign for a pilot vehicle

4. Appropriate Escort and Pilot vehicle resources

Setting of appropriate minimum escort and pilot vehicle resource requirements by road managers is dependent on risk based on:

- the dimensions of the vehicle/load being piloted including width, length, height and rear overhang,
- location of movement, and the geometries of the roads involved,
- traffic variations and density, and
- other associated risk profiles

It is important to note that before travel on a public road, it is the responsibility of the driver or operator of an over-dimensional vehicle to be satisfied that the route has been assessed and the move can occur safely. Through this assessment the operator may choose to utilise additional pilot or escort vehicles beyond the minimums set by road managers to ensure high levels of safety.

4.1 When pilot and escort vehicles are required with oversize LCVs

For transport of oversize loads operating under the [Tasmanian LCV Notice](#), the minimum requirements for pilot and escort vehicles as set by road managers as a condition of access, are outlined in charts within this Guide (section 4.1.2 and 4.1.3) and detailed through the LCV Class I [map](#) for specific load dimensions and roads.

If a route is not covered by the Tasmanian LCV Notice and the NHVR have issued a Class I Permit granting access to the route, the Pilot and Escort vehicle requirements stipulated in the permit take precedence. However, if the permit does not stipulate Pilot and escort vehicle requirements, then the requirements outlined in the matrix contained in 4.1.2, Figure 3 apply.

4.1.1 Pilot requirements for loads with rear overhang exceeding 6.5m

The *Tasmanian LCV Notice* includes permissible rear overhang of up to 7.6m for eligible prime mover and trailer combinations in [Section 9, Table 2](#). For loads involving rear overhang exceeding 6.5m a minimum of two pilot vehicles are required to accompany the load.

4.1.2 Dimensions up to 5.5m width and 30m length (daylight travel)

The 'green matrix' shown in figure 3 provides the minimum requirement for accompanying pilot and escort vehicles for an eligible oversize vehicle operating on roads colour coded green in the LCV Class I map.

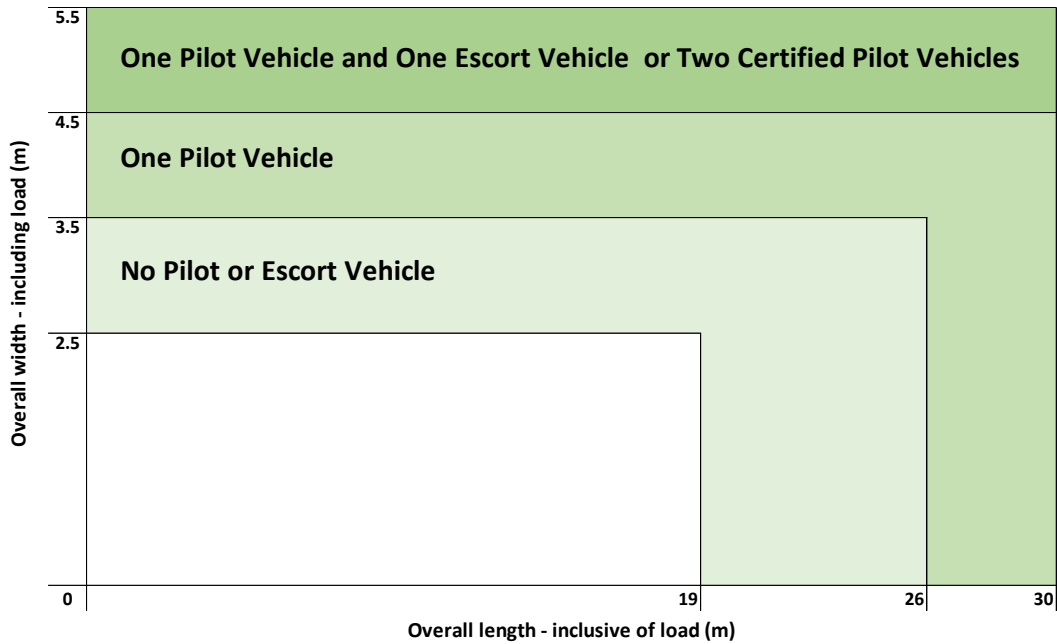


Figure 3: Pilot and escort vehicle requirements for green roads on LCV Class I map

As an example, for an eligible vehicle that is 4.2m wide and less than 26m long operating on a road colour coded green, a minimum of one pilot vehicle is required to accompany the oversized vehicle.

The 'orange matrix' shown in figure 4 provides the minimum requirement for accompanying pilot and escort vehicles for an eligible oversized vehicle operating on roads colour coded orange in the LCV Class I map. The orange roads have been assessed to require higher numbers of pilots and/or escorts compared to the green roads for certain dimension oversized loads.

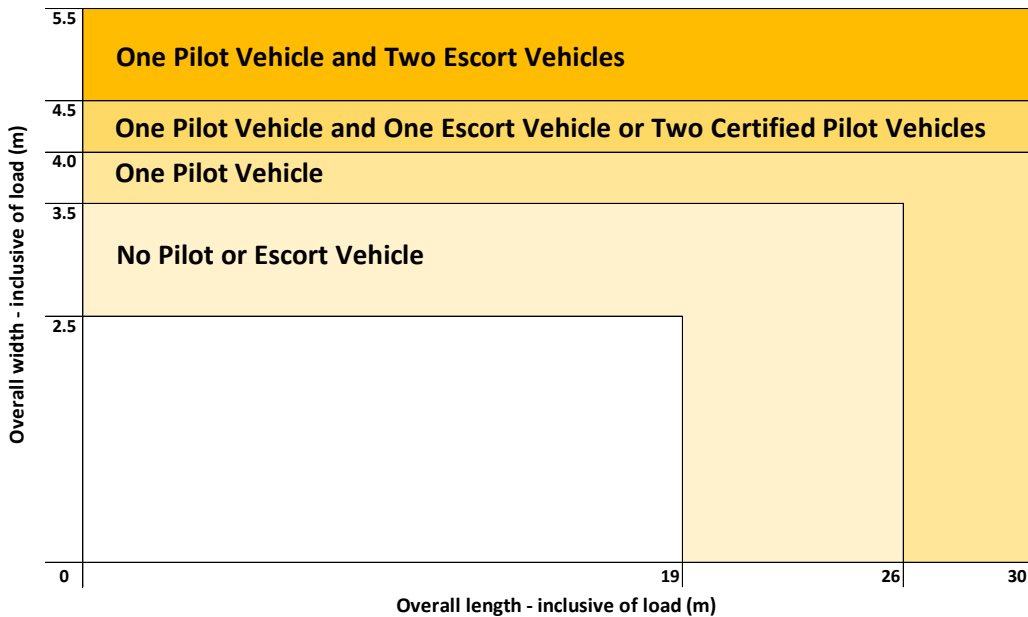


Figure 4: Pilot and escort vehicle requirements for orange roads on LCV Class I map

As an example, for an eligible vehicle that is 4.2m wide and less than 26m long operating on a road colour coded orange, a minimum of one pilot vehicle and one escort vehicle, or two certified pilot vehicles are required to accompany the oversize vehicle.

The ‘blue matrix’ shown in figure 5 provides the minimum requirement for accompanying pilot and escort vehicles for an eligible oversize vehicle operating on roads colour coded blue in the LCV Class I map. The blue roads are geometrically tortuous routes which have been assessed to require higher numbers of pilots and/or escorts compared to the green and orange roads for certain dimension oversize loads. Some identified roads have minimum of 1 pilot vehicle when over 2.5m length. For oversize loads, with dimension greater than 4.5m width or 26m length seeking to travel on blue colour coded roads, access is not provided under notice and a permit application is required for road manager assessment and consent decision.

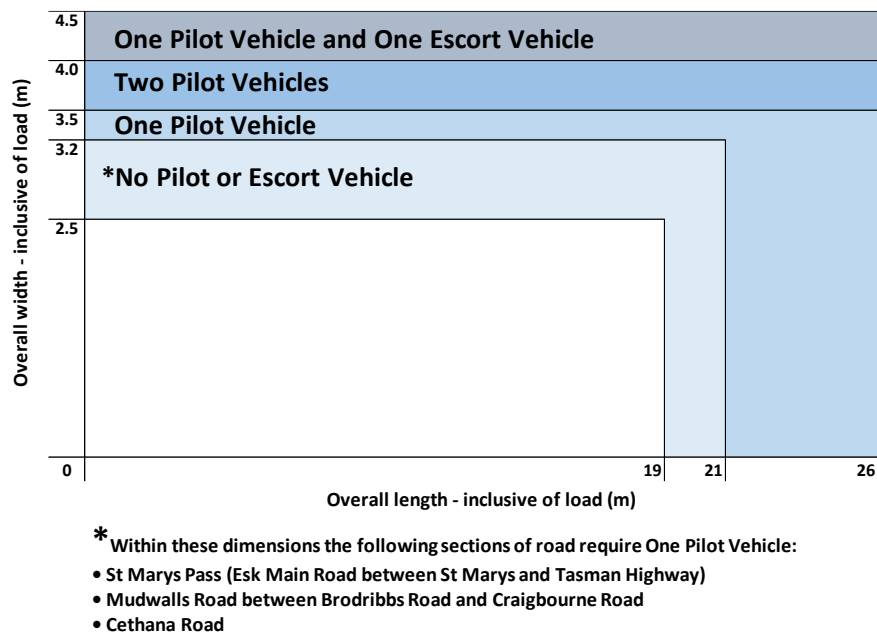


Figure 5: Pilot and escort vehicle requirements for blue roads on LCV Class I map

As an example, for an eligible vehicle that is 4.2m wide and less than 26m long operating on a road colour coded blue, a minimum of one pilot vehicle and one escort vehicle are required to accompany the oversize vehicle. The option of using two certified pilot vehicles is not available in this instance.

4.1.3 Dimensions up to 3.5m width and 26m length, and unladen low loaders

Simplified versions of the pilot and escort requirement matrices are provided for loads with dimensions which don't exceeding 3.5m width or 26m length, and unladen low loaders. The maximum width dimension for unladen low loaders is 2.7m. Figure 6 shows requirements for daylight travel on roads colour coded green in the LCV Class I map.

Pilot and escort requirements - Daylight travel

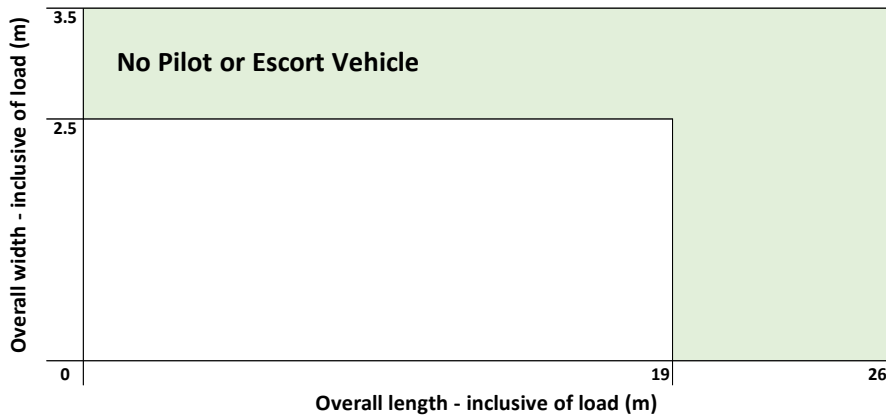


Figure 6: Pilot and escort vehicle requirements for green roads on LCV Class I map daylight travel

Night-time travel is also permitted for certain eligible vehicles as described through the LCV Class I map and in Table 1. Figure 7 shows requirements for night-time travel on roads colour coded green in the LCV Class I map. Night-time travel introduces a requirement for a pilot vehicle for loads exceeding dimensions of 3.1m width or 22m length.

Table 1: eligible oversize vehicles allowed to undertake night-time travel under notice

	Maximum Overall length (in metres)	Maximum Overall width (in metres)
Unladen Low Loader Combination	23	2.7
Oversize only		
Rigid truck	12.5	3.5
Truck & Dog Trailer	19	3.5
Truck & Pig Trailer	19	3.5
Prime Mover & Semi Trailer *	26	3.5

[*Night time travel only for TLC2-3B, TLC2-3C, TLC2-4A, TLC2-4B, TLC2-4C or TLC2-5A]

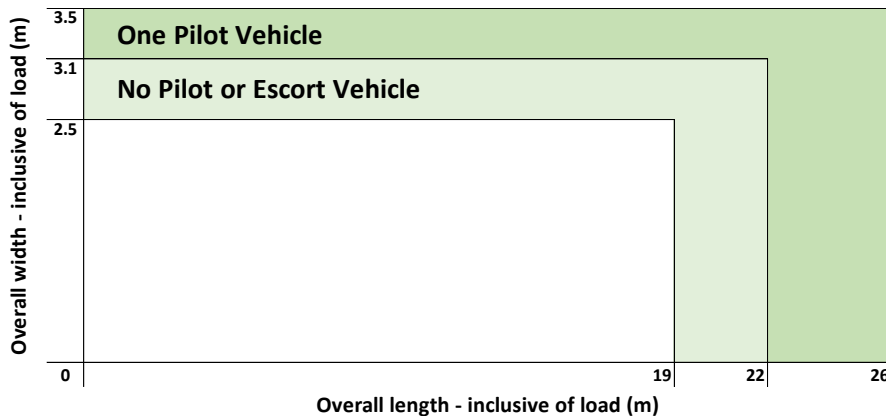


Figure 7: Pilot and escort vehicle requirements for green roads on LCV Class I map night-time travel

The requirements for blue colour coded roads are shown in Figures 8 and 9 for daylight and night-time travel respectively. Travel on blue roads introduces a requirement for a pilot vehicle for loads exceeding dimensions of 3.2m width or 21m length in the daylight, or 3.1m width or 21m length in at night-time.

Pilot and escort requirements - Daylight travel

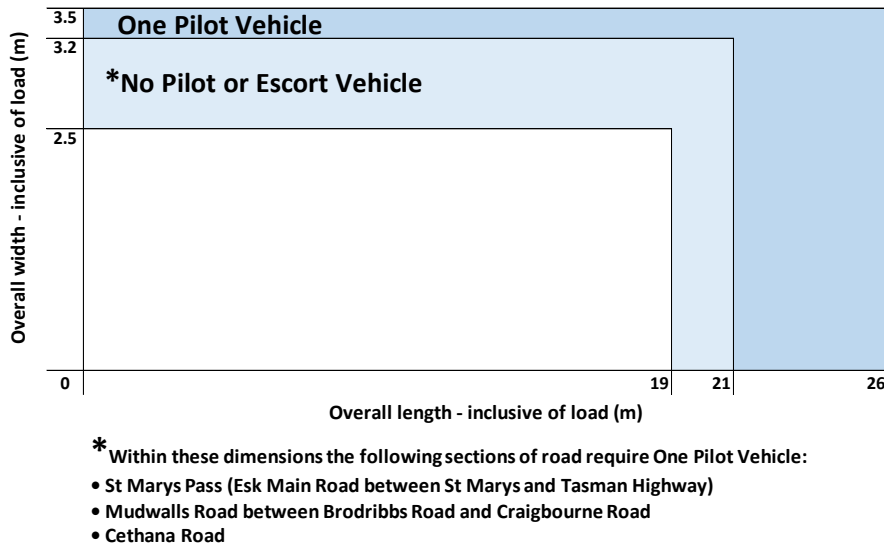


Figure 8: Pilot and escort vehicle requirements for blue roads on LCV Class 1 map daylight travel

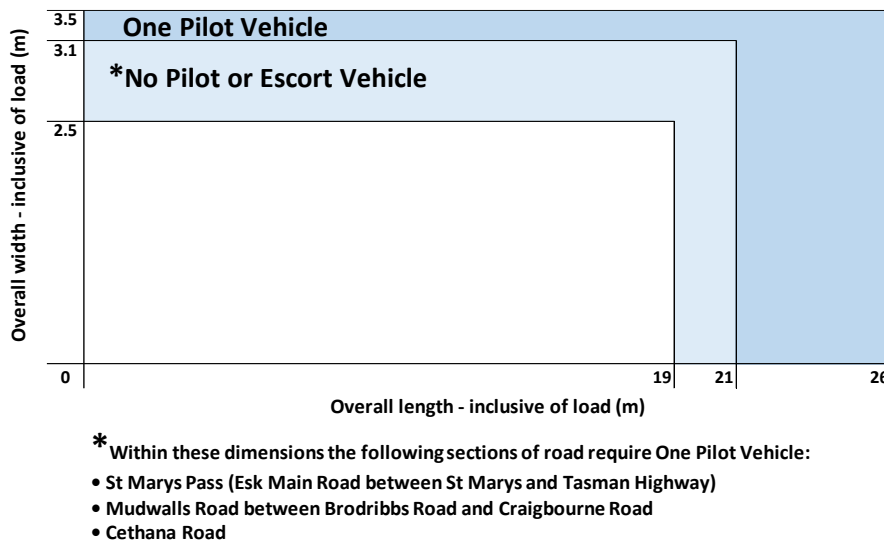


Figure 9: Pilot and escort vehicle requirements for blue roads on LCV Class 1 map, night-time travel

4.2 When pilot and escort vehicles are required with SPVs

For special purpose vehicles operating under the [Tasmanian SPV Notice](#), the minimum requirements for pilot and escort vehicles as set by road managers as conditions of access, are detailed through the Heavy Vehicle Access Management System for SPVs [map](#) for specific vehicle dimensions, roads and travel times.

Roads with access in the HVAMS map are differentially coloured to describe the minimum accompanying vehicle requirements that apply to that road.

When using the HVAMS map you will note that there are symbols of different shapes and colours dotted along some selected routes. These symbols outline bridge and overpass structures that have access conditions applied for crossing the specific structure. By clicking on the symbol additional information in relation to the access requirements. The conditions may include speed limits, lane

position requirements and the number of pilot/escort vehicles required when crossing the structure. The conditions listed must be adhered to.

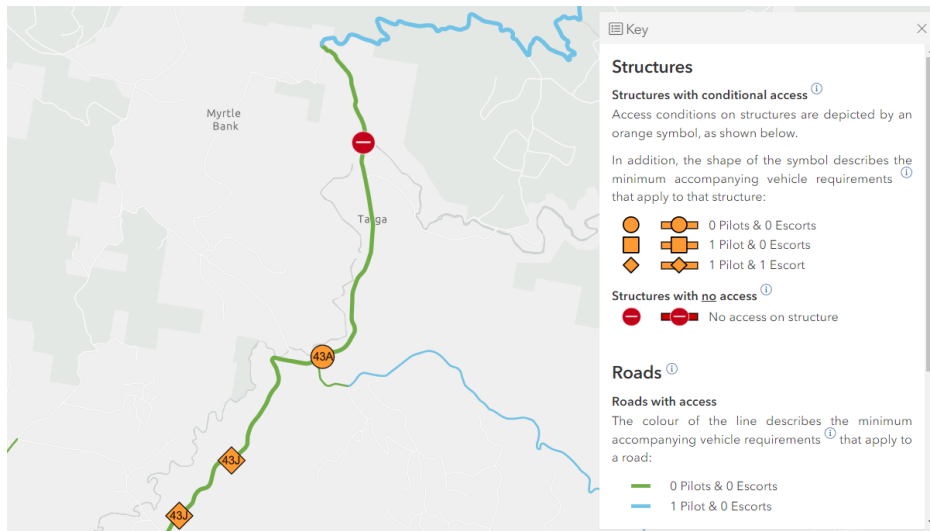


Figure 10: example of pilot and escort vehicle requirements accompanying 6 axle all terrain crane on the Tasman Highway displayed through HVAMS for SPV map

The [Tasmanian SPV Notice](#) (section 16) enables a pilot vehicle piloting a SPV operating under the notice to have a GVM not exceeding 22.5 t subject to it having at least 4 wheels and not towing a trailer. Additionally, it enables the pilot vehicle to be positioned either in front or to the rear of the SPV to ensure that adequate warning is provided to other road users in line with the circumstances.

4.3 When pilot and escort vehicles are required with oversize Agriculture Vehicles

For agricultural vehicles operating under the [National Agricultural Vehicle Notice](#), the minimum requirements for pilot and escort vehicles are set by road managers as conditions of access.

Agricultural vehicles being operated during daytime are to be accompanied by pilot vehicle/s under the following circumstances:

- If the width of the vehicle exceeds 3.5m, and doesn't exceed 4.5 metres = 1 Pilot vehicle
- If the width of the vehicle exceeds 4.5 metres = 2 pilot vehicles

Agricultural vehicles being operated at night are to be accompanied by pilot vehicles under the following circumstances:

- If the width of the vehicle exceeds 3.1m and doesn't exceed 3.5 metres; or exceeds 22.0 metres in length = 1 pilot vehicle

Note: agricultural vehicles exceeding 3.5 metres or 22 metres in length cannot be operated at night.

5. Heavy vehicle escort services and charges

For Tasmania, Transport Safety and Investigation Officers within the Department of State Growth typically provide heavy vehicle escort services for movement of over-dimensional loads where applicable.

For enquiries, charge information and bookings contact:

(03) 6166 3168 or transport.safety@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

It is less common for Tasmania Police to be involved in escorting over-dimensional loads. For enquiries regarding involvement of Tasmania Police contact 131 444.

6. Certification of pilot vehicle drivers

In Tasmania there are two levels of pilot vehicle drivers – level 1 (Pilot) and level 2 (Certified Pilot Vehicle Driver).

- **Level 1 Pilot Driver** in Tasmania is required to hold a full driver's licence (not probationary) and drive a pilot vehicle complying with the requirements of the Heavy Vehicle National Law. No additional formal training or certification is required.
- **Level 2 Certified Pilot Vehicle Driver (CPVD or 'Certified Pilots')** in Tasmania are required to hold a full driver's licence (not probationary), drive a pilot vehicle complying with the requirements of the Heavy Vehicle National Law, and hold a CPVD Authority card demonstrating successful completion of necessary training through a registered training organisation.

Note that Level 1 Pilot and Level 2 Certified Pilots do not have authority under Tasmanian legislation to direct traffic. This situation may change in the future.

6.1 Obtaining a Certified Pilot Vehicle Driver Authority card

The CPVD Authority issued by the Victorian Department of Transport is recognised by Tasmanian road authority. The Tasmanian Department of State Growth does not issue separate CPVD Authority cards.

Further details regarding the CPVD training requirements, renewal requirement, application fees and forms are available from the Victorian Department of Transport [website](#).

6.2 Recognition of Western Australian, Queensland and Northern Territory pilots in Tasmania

Aside from certified pilots with a Victorian Authority, Tasmania recognises Pilots and Traffic Escort Wardens registered in Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland provided they:

- hold a current qualification in their state of origin; and

- provide evidence that they have successfully completed a refresher course of the traffic control competency within the past three years (Control traffic as a pilot vehicle operator-TLIF 3060) before they operate as a Certified Pilot in Tasmania.

7. Driving a pilot vehicle

7.1 Pilot vehicle position

The primary purpose of the Pilot Vehicle is to warn other road users of the presence of the oversize vehicle. There will be occasions when the oversize vehicle has to overtake other road users travelling in the same direction, some of these may be vulnerable road users such as cyclists or pedestrians. The role of the Pilot vehicle driver is to provide warning to all road users including vulnerable road users and to notify the Oversize vehicle driver of their presence.

A pilot vehicle should travel in front of the oversize vehicle on an undivided road and behind the oversize vehicle on a divided road. Where two pilot vehicles are accompanying an oversize vehicle, one is to travel in front and the other behind. However, there may be circumstances where this is not practical or doesn't provide adequate warning to other motorists of the presence of the load. In these circumstances, the driver of the Pilot vehicle is to comply with the position requirements set out as conditions in the exemption.

The pilot vehicle should travel at a suitable distance to vehicle being piloted to ensure adequate warning is provided to other road users its presence. The distance between the pilot vehicle and the oversize vehicle should be adjusted to suit traffic and road conditions taking into consideration traffic volumes, approaching vehicle speed, road alignment, sight distances and the make up of the traffic (eg tourist route, commercial vehicle route etc).

Where escort vehicles are utilised along with pilot vehicles, the positioning of the pilot vehicles may be directed by the driver of the escort vehicle.

Exemption: The [Tasmanian Class 1 Special Purpose Vehicle Exemption Notice](#) [S16-(3)] enables a single pilot vehicle accompanying a SPV operating under the Notice to be positioned either in front or where appropriate behind the SPV to provide adequate warning to other road users.

7.2 Exemptions from the Road Rules

The Tasmanian Road Rules provides a conditional exemption to the driver of a pilot vehicle that is piloting an oversize load from specific road rules. The exemption only applies if it is not practical for the driver to comply with the specific rule, and the driver taking reasonable care. The driver is required to comply with all other relevant law including any conditions applied by the exemption issued for the movement of the oversize vehicle. A list of the road rules that are conditional exempted can be accessed in [Rule 311](#) of the Road Rules.

7.3 Travel Restrictions

Any curfews or travel time restrictions applied as conditions to an exemption allowing the movement of the oversize vehicle/SPV must be strictly adhered to.

If prior to commencing an oversize movement visibility is less than 250 metres due to fog, rain, dust or insects during daylight hours, or if headlamps of oncoming traffic are not visible at a distance of 250 metres of a night-time the movement must not commence until visibility improves.

If during the oversize movement, visibility is reduced to less than 250 metres, the oversize vehicle/SPV and accompanying pilot and escort vehicles must stop at the closest safe location and wait until visibility improves prior to re commencing the journey.

7.4 Pilot Vehicle Driver Responsibilities

The [Heavy Vehicle National Law](#) (S131) requires that the driver of a pilot vehicle does not accompany an oversize vehicle if the oversize vehicle contravenes a condition of the exemption by:

- travelling on a route other than those allowed by the exemption; or
- travels at a time other than a time allowed by the exemption; or
- is accompanied by fewer than the number of pilot or escort vehicles required.

8. Definitions

The definitions below are taken from the [Heavy Vehicle National Law](#) and are applicable to the terms used in the guide.

- **Agricultural implement** means a vehicle without its own automotive power, built to perform agricultural tasks, and includes an agricultural trailer.
Examples—auger, conveyor, field bin, harvester front, irrigating equipment or machinery.
- **Agricultural machine**: means a vehicle with its own automotive power, built to perform agricultural tasks.
Examples— harvester, tractor.
- **Agricultural task** means a task carried out in agriculture.
Examples of an agricultural task— cultivating land, growing and harvesting crops, rearing livestock.
- **Agricultural vehicle** means an agricultural implement or agricultural machine.
- **Daytime** means the period of a day between sunrise and sunset.
- **GVM** (gross vehicle mass), of a vehicle, means the maximum loaded mass of the vehicle—
 - (a) if the registration authority has specified the vehicle’s maximum loaded mass— specified by the registration authority; or
 - (b) otherwise stated by the vehicle’s manufacturer.
- **Night** means the period between sunset on a day and sunrise on the next day.



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