

# Trailable Yachts

May 2004

**i**  
information  
bulletin



## TRAILER-SAILERS

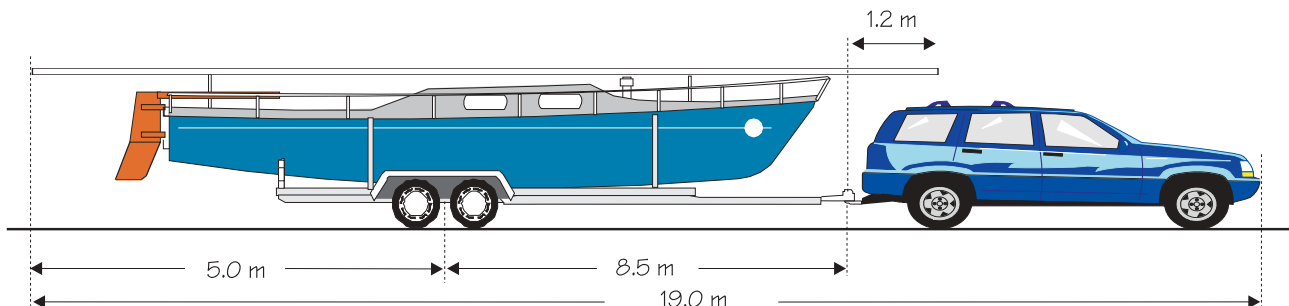
One of VicRoads' responsibilities is to facilitate the orderly and safe movement of vehicles over the Victorian road network. VicRoads has been working with Yachting Victoria to develop safe and efficient operating conditions for transporting yachts. This information bulletin has been produced to ensure that yachts are transported safely whilst recognising practical issues associated with their transportation. The dimension limits and operating conditions for towing trailers carrying yachts, known as trailer-sailers, are outlined in this bulletin.

A regulatory exemption, *Victoria Government Gazette Notice, S39 - Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2004*, allows for the transportation of yachts on trailers with rear overhangs up to 5.0 metres. This bulletin serves as a general permit for those operating under this regulatory exemption. When operating under this exemption a copy of the Gazette Notice or this information bulletin must be carried in the vehicle.

## DIMENSION LIMITS

The dimension limits that apply to vehicles transporting yachts are stipulated in the Victorian *Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 1999*. However, a regulatory exemption has been provided that allows the towing of yacht trailers with a rear overhang of up to 5.0 metres. The regulatory exemption, is only valid for the transport of a yacht, including any mast on the yacht. The dimension limits are illustrated in diagram 1. Vehicles that exceed the dimensions in diagram 1 are not covered by this exemption and will require a specific VicRoads permit to travel on the road network. Permits for these trailers will contain additional safety requirements. To obtain a permit contact VicRoads.

*Diagram 1 – Maximum dimension limits of trailer-sailers*



## REAR OVERHANG

The majority of trailers used to transport yachts have a single axle or a tandem axle group near the middle of the body of the trailer. 'Rear overhang' is the distance from the centre of the trailer's axle or axle group to the rear most part of the load (refer to diagram 2).

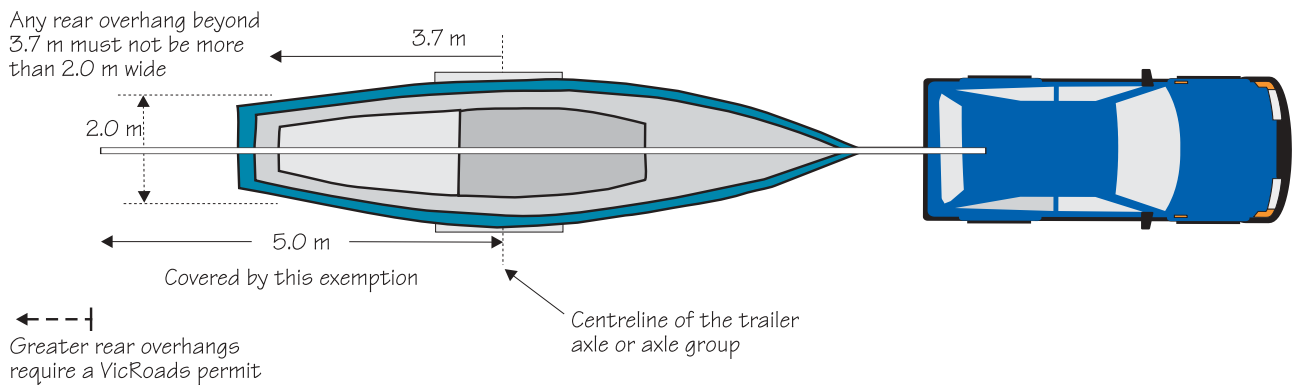
The maximum rear overhang for a trailer, allowed by the *Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 1999*, is:

- a) the length of the load carrying area, or body, ahead of the centre of the trailers axle or axle group; or
- b) 3.7 meters;

whichever is the lesser.

Under the regulatory exemption provided for trailers carrying yachts, the rear overhang may be up to 5.0 metres. However, only the yacht, including any mast (not the trailer) can exceed the 3.7 metre rear overhang limit. To minimise the rear 'kick-out' as the vehicle turns, the portion of the yacht including any mast that exceeds a rear overhang of 3.7 metres must not exceed 2.0 metres wide (refer to diagram 2).

**Diagram 2 – Dimension limits for rear overhang on trailer-sailers**



## FORWARD PROJECTION

The mast when secured, or any part of the yacht, should not extend more than 1.2 metres forward of the point of articulation between the trailer and the towing vehicle. If this limit is exceeded, the front projection of the yacht may create a road safety hazard when the vehicle turns a corner.

## WARNING DEVICES

Warning devices are necessary to alert other motorists of the potential road safety hazards associated with a trailer with a large rear overhang.

### HEADLIGHTS

The towing vehicle must have its low-beam headlights on at all times while travelling, including in the daytime.

### FLAGS

Masts protruding from the rear of a trailer can be difficult to see. A warning flag is required at the end of a protruding mast. The warning flag must be brightly colored red or yellow, or red and yellow, at least 450 millimetres long and at least 450 millimetres wide.



*A flag must be attached to protruding masts*

## ADDITIONAL LIGHTING AT NIGHT

In addition to normal lighting requirements for a vehicle travelling at night, where the load protrudes from the rear of the trailer by more than 1.2 metres, the following additional lights are required:

- a) Side marker lights displaying a yellow light to the front, and a red or yellow light to the rear, must be hung at intervals of no more than 2 metres along the projecting load; and
- b) A rear clearance light, displaying a red light (visible for at least 200 metres), must be fitted to the rear of the projecting load (usually a mast).

## SELECTING A TOWING VEHICLE

Care needs to be exercised in selecting a towing vehicle. It is advisable to contact the motor vehicle manufacturer for advice on this matter. The motor vehicle must have sufficient mass and manufacturer's ratings to ensure that the laden trailer will not push the towing vehicle around, compromising its steering, braking and stability. The trailer must exert a positive downward force on the towing vehicle's trailer coupling to maintain trailer stability and handling.

The total mass limit for a trailer (including any load) being towed by a light<sup>1</sup> motor vehicle is the lesser of:

- a) The capacity of the towing apparatus fitted to the motor vehicle; or
- b) The maximum trailer mass specified by the motor vehicle's manufacturer.

<sup>1</sup> A light motor vehicle has a manufacturer's total mass rating not exceeding 4.5 tonnes.

## SAFE TRANSPORTATION

The registered operator of a motor vehicle must ensure that the combination can be transported safely on the road network. In particular, the yacht and associated accessories must be securely restrained as falling or fallen items have the potential to strike other vehicles or pedestrians, creating a safety hazard and disrupting traffic flow.

## TRAVELLING INTERSTATE

It is important to note that operating conditions vary across Australia and permits may be required from other State and Territory road authorities for travel in their respective jurisdictions. It is advisable to contact the relevant road authority prior to travelling interstate.

## CONTACTS

Please contact the following for information regarding:

### VicRoads Permits

Burwood office: Tel: (03) 9881 8853  
Broadmeadows office: Tel: (03) 9302 8405

### Policy enquiries

VicRoads e-mail: [cvo@roads.vic.gov.au](mailto:cvo@roads.vic.gov.au) or  
VicRoads website: [www.vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au)

### Yachts

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