

Welcome to the Highways Agency guidance for the notification requirements for the movement of large or heavy loads by road. If you intend to move an abnormal indivisible load by road in GB then the following pages will provide some of the necessary forms and guidance. Many cases will be covered by forms and guidance held on the [Department for Transport \(DfT\)](#) website, especially Special Types General Order moves and Vehicle Special Orders.

Vehicle Special Order (VSO). Application to move Special Types or Special Purpose vehicles, such as very large agricultural vehicles, that may not be fully permitted by the Construction and Use (C & U) Regulations or fall outside the scope of the Special Types General Order should be made to Vehicle Technology & Standards Division 7 in the Department for Transport. Enquiries to Amanda John on Tel. 020 7944 2064; Fax 020 7944 2089 or by email to: amanda.john@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Abnormal Indivisible Loads

An "abnormal indivisible load" is defined in The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order 2003 * as -

“ a load that cannot, without undue expense or risk of damage, be divided into two or more loads for the purpose of being carried on a road and that -

on account of its length or width, cannot be carried on a motor vehicle of category N3 or a trailer of category O4 (or by a combination of such vehicles) that complies in all respects with Part 2 of The Construction and Use Regulations; or

on account of its weight, cannot be carried on a motor vehicle of category N3 or a trailer of category O4 (or by a combination of such vehicles) that complies in all respects with-

Authorised Weight Regulations (or, if those Regulations do not apply, the equivalent provisions in Part 4 of the Construction and Use Regulations); and

Part 2 of the Construction and Use Regulations.”

* a copy can be obtained from The Stationary Office: by Email book.orders@tso.co.uk ; by Fax 0870 600 5533 or by Telephone 0870 600 5522 quoting Statutory Instrument No. 1998

Notifications for abnormal indivisible loads are only required where loads or vehicles exceed maximum vehicle weight, axle weight or dimensions in the Construction and Use (C & U) Regulations in any of the following ways:

Weight:

Gross weight or axle weights exceeding C & U or Authorised Weight limits up to 80,000kgs (78.74 tons).
Action required: 2 clear days notice with indemnity to Highway and Bridge Authorities.

Gross weight (of vehicle carrying the load) exceeding 80,000kgs (78.74tons) up to 150,000kgs (147.63tons).

Action required: 2 clear days notice to Police and 5 clear days notice with indemnity to Highway and Bridge Authorities.

Gross weight (of vehicle carrying the load) exceeding 150,000kgs (147.63tons).

Action required: HA Special Order ([form BE16](#)) plus 5 clear days notice to Police and 5 clear days notice with indemnity to Highway and Bridge Authorities.

Width:

Width exceeding 2.9 metres (for C & U loads) 3.0 metres (9' 10") up to 5.0 metres (16' 5") for other loads
Action required: 2 clear days notice to the Police.

Width exceeding 5.0 metres (16' 5") up to 6.1 metres (20')
Action required: [HA form VR1](#) plus 2 clear days notice to Police.

Width exceeding 6.1 metres (20')
Action required: HA Special Order ([form BE16](#)) plus 5 clear days notice to Police and 5 clear days notice with indemnity to Highway and Bridge Authorities.

Length:

When exceeding 18.65 metres (61' 2") up to 30 metres (98' 5") rigid length - (Vehicle or train of vehicles)
Action required: 2 clear days notice to the Police.

Vehicle combination exceeding 25.9 metres (85').
Action required: 2 clear days notice to the Police.

When exceeding 30.0 metres (98' 5") rigid length
Action required: HA Special Order ([form BE 16](#)) plus 5 clear days notice to Police and 5 clear days notice with indemnity to Highway and Bridge Authorities.

NB For some very light indivisible loads, such as yacht masts, that are moved using conventional motor vehicles not exceeding 12 tonnes gross vehicle weight or on trailers not exceeding 10 tonnes gross vehicle weight, a Highways Agency Special Order (form BE 16) will be required if the rigid length exceeds 27.4 metres (89' 11").

[Form VR1](#)

VR1 approval is required for vehicles where the overall width of the vehicle or load exceeds 5.0 metres but does not exceed 6.1 metres. Forms should be submitted to the Highways Agency Abnormal Loads team at least 2 weeks prior to the planned date of the movement(s). You cannot apply too early. We invite applications for agreement in principle even at the pre-tender stage, before any financial commitment is made to supply and deliver the load.

NB Approval is not automatic and is at the discretion of the Highways Agency Abnormal Loads Team acting on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport. For example the amount of disruption and congestion the load could cause and whether alternative modes of transport (such as water, rail etc.) could be used is taken into account when considering whether to grant a permit to allow the load to move by road.

[Download form VR1](#)**[Form BE16](#)**

A Special Order is required for vehicles that exceed: 30.0 metres (98' 5") rigid length or 6.1 metres (20' 0") in width or 150,000kgs (147.63 tons) in weight, where the weight is the gross weight of any vehicle or combination of vehicles actually carrying the load. In order for the necessary approvals to be obtained from the Police and Highway and Bridge Authorities, forms should be submitted to the Highways Agency Abnormal Loads team at least 10 weeks prior to the planned date of the movement(s). You cannot apply too early. We invite applications even at the pre-tender stage, before any financial commitment is made to supply and deliver the load.

NB Approval is not automatic and is at the discretion of the Highways Agency Abnormal Loads Team acting on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport. For example the amount of disruption and congestion the load could cause and whether alternative modes of transport (such as water, rail etc.) could be used is taken into account when considering whether to grant a permit to allow the load to move by road.

[Download form BE16](#)

The following forms and guidance are available from the [Highways Agency Site](#):

- Form VR1
- Form BE16
- Aide memoire for notification requirements when not complying with C & U
- Form of notice to police, highway and bridge authorities
- Form of notice to police only
- Form of indemnity

Enquiries to:

Julia Haley, Highways Agency, Abnormal Loads Team, C6, 5 Broadway, Broad Street, Birmingham B15 1 BL

E-mail abnormal.loads@highways.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 0121 678 8411 Fax: 0121 678 8569

Forms and guidance on [DfT website](#):

- Form of notice to police, highway and bridge authorities
- Form of notice to police only
- Form of indemnity
- Attendants and markers
- Wide abnormal loads
- Carriage of AIL length limits for notification
- Vehicle Special Orders (VSO).