

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

S.I. No. 5 of 2003

**ROAD TRAFFIC (CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF
VEHICLES) REGULATIONS 2003**

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The Minister for Transport, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by sections 11, 12 and 13 of the Road Traffic Act 1961 (No. 24 of 1961), and the National Roads and Road Traffic (Transfer of Departmental Administration and Ministerial Functions) Order 2002 (S.I. No. 298 of 2002)) (as adapted by the Public Enterprise (Alteration of Name of Department and Title of Minister) Order 2002 (S.I. No. 305 of 2002)) and for the purpose of giving effect to Directive 96/53/EC of 25 July 1996⁽¹⁾, makes the following regulations:

**Part 1
Preliminary and General**

1. (1) These Regulations may be cited as the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 2003.

2. (1) In these Regulations -

"agricultural trailer" means a trailer, the property of a person engaged in agriculture, which is designed and used primarily for work on the land and which is used on a public road only incidentally to such work;

"articulated bus" means a large public service vehicle so constructed that -

(a) 2 rigid intercommunicating passenger compartments are connected by an articulated section allowing free movement of passengers between the 2 compartments, and

(b) connection and division of the 2 compartments is possible only in a workshop;

"articulated vehicle" means the combination of a mechanically propelled vehicle and a drawn vehicle attached by partial superimposition and so constructed and attached that not less than 20 per cent of the weight of the drawn vehicle is borne by the mechanically propelled vehicle;

¹ O.J. No. L 235, 17.9.96, p. 59

"combination of vehicles" means a combination of a mechanically propelled vehicle and one trailer;

"Council Directive" means Council Directive 96/53/EC of 25 July 1996⁽¹⁾.

"design gross vehicle weight" means the gross weight of a vehicle laden with the heaviest load which it can reasonably carry having regard to the engine, brakes, tyres and general construction of such vehicle and shall, until the contrary is shown, be taken to be its design gross weight as specified by its manufacturer or, where the design gross weight as specified by the manufacturer is not ascertainable, the design gross weight as specified by an automotive engineer;

"drawbar" means any drawbar, chain or other towing device and includes any special fitting for the attachment of such drawbar, chain or towing device;

"goods trailer" means a trailer constructed or adapted primarily for the conveyance of goods or burden of any description;

"goods vehicle" means a mechanically propelled vehicle, or an articulated vehicle, constructed or adapted primarily for the conveyance of goods or burden of any description;

"international journey" means, in the case of a goods vehicle, a journey on which the entire contents of the load are being transported to or from another State or in the case of a passenger vehicle, a journey on which all of the passengers are travelling to or from another State;

"land implement" means a trailer which consists of any implement or machinery used with a land tractor in connection with agriculture, forestry, land levelling, dredging or similar operations, and includes any trailer which carries only the necessary gear and equipment of the land tractor which draws it;

"land tractor" means a tractor designed and used primarily for work on the land in connection with agriculture, forestry, land levelling, dredging and similar operations and which is -

(a) driven on a road only when proceeding to and from the site of such work and which when so driven hauls nothing except an agricultural trailer, a land implement, a land trailer or a trailer specially designed and constructed and used only for the conveyance of any implement or machinery used with the tractor in connection with its work on the land, or

(b) used on a road while it hauls nothing except an agricultural trailer;

"land trailer" means a trailer used for work on the land and used on a road only when proceeding to or from the site of such work;

¹ O.J. No. L 235, 17.9.96, p. 59

"large tractor" means a tractor the weight unladen of which exceeds 7.25 tonnes;

"mechanically propelled cycle" means a mechanically propelled vehicle which has less than 4 wheels and the weight unladen of which does not exceed 400 kilograms;

"passenger accommodation" means seating passenger accommodation determined in accordance with the provisions of the Road Traffic (Passenger Accommodation of Mechanically Propelled Vehicles) Regulations 1962 (S.I. No. 143 of 1962);

"passenger vehicle" means a mechanically propelled vehicle (other than a cycle) constructed primarily for the carriage of passengers;

"pneumatic tyre" means a tyre which is -

- (a) provided with, or together with the wheel on which it is mounted forms, a continuous closed chamber inflated with air to a pressure substantially exceeding atmospheric pressure when the tyre is in the condition in which it is normally used but is not subject to any load,
- (b) capable of being inflated and deflated without removal from the wheel or vehicle, and
- (c) such that, when it is deflated and is subjected to a normal load, the sides of the tyre collapse;

"Regulations of 1963" means the Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 1963 (S.I. No. 190 of 1963);

"Regulations of 2000" means the Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulations 2000 (S.I. No. 224 of 2000);

"semi-trailer" means the drawn component of an articulated vehicle, or a vehicle constructed or adapted for use as such drawn component;

"soft tyre" means a tyre (other than a pneumatic tyre) of soft or elastic material, which material is either -

- (a) continuous round the circumference of the wheel, or
- (b) in segments so fitted that, so far as is reasonably practicable, no space is left between the ends thereof,

and is of such thickness as to minimise, so far as is reasonably practicable, vibration when the vehicle is in motion, and is so constructed as to be free

from any defect which might in any way cause damage to the surface of a road;

"tonne" is the weight executed by a mass of 1,000 kilograms;

"track-laying" in relation to a vehicle means that the vehicle is so constructed that its entire weight is not transmitted to the road surface by circular wheels;

"tractor" means a mechanically propelled vehicle (other than a cycle) which is not constructed itself to carry any load except the following:-

- (a) water, fuel, accumulators and other equipment used for the purposes of propulsion,
- (b) loose tools and loose equipment,
- (c) in the case of a vehicle fitted with a crane, dynamo, welding plant or other special appliance or apparatus which is a permanent fixture, such appliance or apparatus, and
- (d) in the case of a land tractor, a detachable platform, container or implement (being a platform, container or implement used primarily for farm work) together with the load on or in such platform, container or implement;

"trailer" means a vehicle attached to a mechanically propelled vehicle (or to another vehicle attached to a mechanically propelled vehicle) or a vehicle constructed or adapted for the purpose of being drawn by a mechanically propelled vehicle, but does not include a semi-trailer;

"vehicle transporter" means a vehicle constructed or adapted to carry 2 or more vehicles.

"wheel", in relation to a vehicle, means a wheel the tyre or rim of which, when the vehicle is in motion, is in contact with the ground;

(2) In these Regulations, any 2 wheels of a vehicle shall be regarded as one wheel if the distance between the centres of the portions of the wheels which come in contact with the ground is less than 457 millimetres.

(3) In these Regulations -

- (a) a reference to a Regulation is to a Regulation of these Regulations, unless it is indicated that reference to some other Regulations is intended, and
- (b) a reference to a paragraph or subparagraph is a reference to a paragraph or subparagraph of the provision in which the reference occurs, unless it is indicated that reference to some other provision is intended.

Part 2 Weights

3. (1) In this Part -

"air suspension system " means a system in which at least 75 per cent of the spring effect is caused by the elasticity of a confined gas;

"appropriate motor vehicle" means a mechanically propelled vehicle having at least 3 axles which is fitted with -

(a) a brake system approved in accordance with the requirements of the Council Directive 71/320/EEC of 26 July 1971⁽²⁾ as amended by Commission Directive 98/12/EC of 27 January 1998⁽³⁾, which includes antilock devices in addition to any other devices necessary for the satisfactory operation of the service brakes under all conditions of loading,

(b) a plate complying with the requirements of the Regulations of 2000, and

(c) twin tyres and an air suspension system or an equivalent system on the driving axle or driving axles;

"conditioned vehicle" means a mechanically propelled vehicle, trailer or semi-trailer with a design gross vehicle weight in excess of 3,500 kilograms, whose fixed or movable superstructure is specially equipped for the carriage of goods at controlled temperatures and whose side walls, inclusive of insulation, are each at least 45 millimetres thick;

"equivalent system" means a suspension system which fulfils the conditions for equivalence to air suspension as set out in Annex II to the Council Directive;

"four axle bogie" means 4 successive axles the outermost of which are spaced at a distance apart of less than 4.3 metres;

"intermodal journey" means a journey to or from a rail terminal or a seaport in the State for onward transfer of goods, such that the goods themselves are not handled in changing modes;

"refrigerated vehicle" means any mechanically propelled vehicle, trailer or semi-trailer specially designed and constructed for the carriage of goods at a temperature below the ambient temperature;

"tandem axles" means 2 successive axles, not being part of a triaxle or a four axle bogie which are spaced at a distance apart of not more than 2.5 metres;

"tractor unit" means the drawing component of an articulated vehicle;

² O.J. L 202 of 6.9.71, p.37

³ O.J. L 81 of 18.3.98, p.1

"triaxle" means 3 successive axles, not being part of a four axle bogie, the outermost of which are spaced at a distance apart of not more than 3.25 metres;

(2) In this Part, a reference to the weight laden of a vehicle or combination of vehicles, or to the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a vehicle or combination of vehicles, is construed as a reference to the weight of such vehicle or combination together with its load, if any, and any reference to the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by any part of a vehicle or combination of vehicles is construed accordingly.

(3) In this Part, the weight transmitted by an axle of a vehicle is taken as the weight transmitted by all the wheels of that vehicle the centres of which lie in a vertical plane extending across the full width of the vehicle at right angles to its longitudinal axis.

(4) In this Part, the distance between any 2 axles is construed as the distance between the respective transverse vertical planes in which the centres of the wheels of such axles lie.

(5) In this Part, the distance between the king-pin and centre of an axle is construed as the distance, measured horizontally, between the king-pin and the transverse vertical plane in which the centres of the wheels of the axle lie.

4. The weight transmitted to the surface of a road by any wheel of a vehicle shall not exceed -

(a) where the wheel is fitted with a pneumatic tyre and is part of the sole driving axle of a vehicle, 5.75 tonnes,

(b) where the wheel is not part of the sole driving axle of a vehicle, but is fitted with a pneumatic tyre, 5 tonnes,

(c) where the wheel is fitted with a soft tyre, 16 kilograms for each millimetre width of the tyre measured at the point of contact of the tyre with the ground, or

(d) where the wheel is not fitted with a pneumatic or soft tyre 10 kilograms for each millimetre width of the wheel or its tyre measured at the point of contact of the wheel or tyre with the ground.

5. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a single axle of a vehicle shall not exceed 10 tonnes.

(2) The weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a single axle which is the sole driving axle of a vehicle may, where the axle is fitted with twin tyres, exceed 10 tonnes but shall not exceed 10.5 tonnes.

- (3) The weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a single axle which is the sole driving axle of a vehicle may, where the axle is fitted with twin tyres and an air suspension system or an equivalent system, exceed 10 tonnes but shall not exceed 11.5 tonnes.
6. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by tandem axles of a vehicle shall not exceed -
- (a) 11.5 tonnes, if the distance between the axles is less than 1.0 metres,
 - (b) 16 tonnes, if the distance between the axles is not less than 1.0 metres and less than 1.3 metres, or
 - (c) 18 tonnes, if the distances between the axles is not less than 1.3 metres and less than 1.8 metres.
- (2) The weight transmitted to the surface of a road by the tandem axles of a mechanically propelled vehicle may exceed 18 tonnes but shall not exceed 19 tonnes in the case of tandem axles where the distance between the axles is not less than 1.3 metres and is less than 1.8 metres and either -
- (a) one axle is a driving axle and is fitted with twin tyres and an air suspension system or an equivalent system,
 - (b) both axles are driving axles and are fitted with twin tyres and air suspension systems or equivalent systems, or
 - (c) both axles are driving axles and are fitted with twin tyres and neither axle transmits a weight in excess of 9.5 tonnes to the surface of a road.
- (3) In the case of tandem axles of a trailer or semi-trailer where the distance between the axles is not less than 1.8 metres, the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by the tandem axles may exceed 18 tonnes but shall not exceed 20 tonnes.
7. The weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a triaxle shall not exceed -
- (a) 21 tonnes, if the distance between the two closest adjacent axles is less than 1.3 metres, or
 - (b) 24 tonnes, if the distance between the two closest adjacent axles is not less than 1.3 metres.
8. The weight transmitted to the surface of a road by a four axle bogie shall not exceed 24 tonnes.
9. The weight laden of a vehicle having 2 axles shall not exceed -
- (a) 16 tonnes, if the distance between the front and rear axles is less than 3 metres, or

- (b) 18 tonnes, if the distance between the front and rear axles is not less than 3 metres.
10. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight laden of a vehicle having 3 axles shall not exceed 25 tonnes.
- (2) The weight laden of a mechanically propelled vehicle having 3 axles may exceed 25 tonnes but shall not exceed 26 tonnes provided the vehicle is -
- (a) equipped with twin tyres and an air suspension system or an equivalent system on each driving axle, or
- (b) equipped with twin tyres and 2 driving axles neither of which transmits to the surface of a road a weight in excess of 9.5 tonnes.
- (3) The weight laden of an articulated vehicle having 3 axles may exceed 25 tonnes but shall not exceed 26 tonnes.
- (4) The weight laden, expressed in tonnes, of a rigid mechanically propelled vehicle or of a trailer, having 3 axles, shall not exceed the number obtained when the distance between the extreme front and rear axles, expressed in metres correct to one decimal place, is multiplied by 5.5.
- (5) The weight laden, expressed in tonnes, of a tractor unit having 3 axles, shall not exceed the number obtained when the distance between the extreme front and rear axles, expressed in metres correct to one decimal place, is multiplied by 6.
- (6) The weight laden, expressed in tonnes, of an articulated vehicle having 3 axles shall not exceed the number obtained when the distance between the king-pin and centre of the rear axle, expressed in metres correct to one decimal place, is multiplied by 5.5.
11. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight laden of a rigid mechanically propelled vehicle or trailer having 4 axles shall not exceed 30 tonnes.
- (2) The weight laden of a rigid mechanically propelled vehicle having 4 axles may exceed 30 tonnes but shall not exceed 32 tonnes provided the vehicle is -
- (a) equipped with twin tyres and an air suspension system or an equivalent system on each driving axle, or
- (b) equipped with twin tyres and 2 driving axles neither of which transmits to the surface of a road a weight in excess of 9.5 tonnes.
- (3) The weight laden, expressed in tonnes, of a rigid mechanically propelled vehicle or trailer having 4 axles, shall not exceed the number obtained when the distance between the extreme front and rear axles, expressed in metres correct to one decimal place, is multiplied by 5.

- (4) The weight laden, expressed in tonnes, of a tractor unit having 4 axles, shall not exceed the number obtained when the distance between the extreme front and rear axles, expressed in metres correct to one decimal place, is multiplied by 6.
12. The weight laden, expressed in tonnes, of an articulated vehicle having 4 or more axles shall not exceed the number obtained when the distance between the king-pin and centre of the rear axle, expressed in metres correct to one decimal place, is multiplied by 5.5.
13. (1) Subject to Regulation 12 and to this Regulation, the weight laden of an articulated vehicle having a total of 4 axles shall not exceed 35 tonnes.
- (2) The weight laden of an articulated vehicle having 4 axles may exceed 35 tonnes but shall not exceed 38 tonnes if the vehicle -
- (a) consists of a 2 axle tractor unit and a 2 axle semi-trailer,
 - (b) is equipped with twin tyres and an air suspension system or an equivalent system on each driving axle,
 - (c) is equipped with a brake system approved in accordance with the requirements of the Directive 71/320/EEC of 26 July 1971⁽⁴⁾ as amended by Directive 98/12/EC of 27 January 1998⁽⁵⁾ which includes antilock devices in addition to any other devices necessary for the satisfactory operation of the service brakes under all conditions of loading, and
 - (d) is equipped with a plate complying with the requirements of the Regulations of 2000.
14. (1) Subject to Regulation 12 and to this Regulation, the weight laden of an articulated vehicle having a total of 5 axles shall not exceed 40 tonnes.
- (2) Until 1 January 2008, the weight laden of a combination of a 2 axle tractor unit and a 3 axle semi-trailer may exceed 40 tonnes but shall not exceed 42 tonnes.
- (3) The weight laden of a combination of an appropriate motor vehicle and a 2 axle semi-trailer may exceed 40 tonnes but shall not exceed 42 tonnes.
- (4) The weight laden of an articulated vehicle having 5 axles may exceed 40 tonnes but shall not exceed 44 tonnes if the vehicle -
- (a) consists of an appropriate motor vehicle and a 2 axle semi-trailer,
 - (b) is carrying a 40 foot ISO container on an intermodal journey, and

⁴ O.J. L 202 of 6.9.71, p.37

⁵ O.J. L 81 of 18.3.98, p.1

(c) is equipped with a plate complying with the requirements of the Regulations of 2000.

15. (1) Subject to Regulation 12 and to this Regulation, the weight laden of an articulated vehicle having a total of 6 or more axles shall not exceed 40 tonnes.

(2) The weight laden of a combination of an appropriate motor vehicle and a 3 axle semi-trailer may exceed 40 tonnes but shall not exceed 44 tonnes.
16. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight laden of a combination of vehicles comprising a two-axle mechanically propelled vehicle and a single axle trailer shall not exceed 22 tonnes.

(2) The weight laden of a combination of vehicles comprising a 2 axle mechanically propelled vehicle and a single axle trailer, where the distance between the rearmost axle of the vehicle and the axle of the trailer is not less than 3 metres may exceed 22 tonnes but shall not exceed 26 tonnes.
17. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight laden of a combination of vehicles having 4 axles shall not exceed 30 tonnes.

(2) The weight laden of a combination of vehicles having 4 axles, where the distance between the rearmost axle of the vehicle and the foremost axle of the trailer is not less than 3 metres may exceed 30 tonnes but shall not exceed 36 tonnes.
18. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight laden of a combination of vehicles having 5 axles shall not exceed 34 tonnes.

(2) The weight laden of a combination of vehicles having 5 axles, where the distance between the rearmost axle of the vehicle and the foremost axle of the trailer is not less than 3 metres, may exceed 34 tonnes but shall not exceed 40 tonnes.

(3) The weight laden of a combination of an appropriate motor vehicle and a 2 axle trailer, where the distance between the rearmost axle of the vehicle and the foremost axle of the trailer is not less than 3 metres, may exceed 34 tonnes but shall not exceed 42 tonnes.
19. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight laden of a combination of vehicles having 6 axles shall not exceed 34 tonnes.

(2) The weight laden of a combination of vehicles having 6 axles, where the distance between the rearmost axle of the vehicle and the foremost axle of the trailer is not less than 3 metres, may exceed 34 tonnes but shall not exceed 40 tonnes.

- (3) The weight laden of a combination of an appropriate motor vehicle and a 3 axle trailer, where the distance between the rearmost axle of the vehicle and the foremost axle of the trailer is not less than 3 metres, may exceed 34 tonnes but shall not exceed 44 tonnes.
20. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the weight laden of a track-laying vehicle shall not exceed 7.5 tonnes.
- (2) This Regulation does not apply to a track-laying vehicle while it is being loaded onto or unloaded from a conveying vehicle or while it is travelling for a distance not exceeding 100 metres between such vehicle and a place off the road.
21. The weight transmitted to any strip of the surface of a road upon which a track-laying vehicle rests, contained between any two parallel lines drawn 600 millimetres apart on that surface at right angles to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle, shall not exceed 10 tonnes.
22. In calculating, for the purpose of these Regulations, the weight laden of a large public service vehicle or the weight transmitted by an axle or wheel thereof, the vehicle is deemed to be carrying its full complement of standing and sitting passengers, and weights of 65 kilograms each are to be placed in the correct relative positions for the driver and each passenger.

Part 3 Dimensions

23. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the overall width of a vehicle is the distance between vertical planes parallel to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle and passing through the extreme projecting points on each side of the vehicle, and for that purpose any receptacle (within the meaning of section 16 (4) of the Road Traffic Act 1961 (No. 24 of 1961)) is regarded as part of the vehicle.

(2) In determining the extreme projecting points, the following items are disregarded -

- (a) customs sealing devices and their protection,
- (b) devices for securing the tarpaulin and their protection,
- (c) tyre failure tell-tale devices,
- (d) protruding flexible parts of a spray-suppression system,
- (e) lighting equipment,
- (f) rear-view mirrors,
- (g) tyre-pressure indicators,
- (h) retractable steps, and
- (i) the deflected part of the tyre walls immediately above the point of contact with the ground.

(3) In determining the extreme projecting points of passenger vehicles with accommodation for more than 8 passengers, access ramps in running order, lifting platforms and similar equipment in running order, may be disregarded provided -

- (a) that the corners of the ramps facing forwards or rearwards are rounded to a radius of not less than 5 millimetres, and
- (b) that they do not protrude more than 10 millimetres from the side of the vehicle.

24. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the overall length of a vehicle is the distance between vertical planes at right angles to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle and passing through the extreme projecting points at the front and rear of the vehicle.

(2) Removable superstructures and standardised freight containers are included in the calculation of the overall length of a vehicle or combination of vehicles.

(3) The drawbar is included in the calculation of the overall length of a trailer.

- (4) Any ladder permanently attached to a vehicle for the purpose of affording access to the roof and not projecting rearwards more than 230 millimetres beyond the rear of the vehicle is disregarded in the calculation of the overall length of a vehicle.
25. The dimensions of an articulated vehicle, an articulated bus or of a combination of vehicles are determined with the longitudinal axes of the drawing and drawn components in the same vertical plane.
26. (1) This Regulation does not apply to –
- (a) a vehicle belonging to, or used for official purposes by, the Defence Forces,
 - (b) a vehicle for grass-cutting, hedge-trimming or forestry operations while used in the day time, or
 - (c) a land implement while used in the day time or in the months of July, August, September or October, during lighting-up hours while complying with the Road Traffic (Lighting of Vehicles) Regulations 1963 (S.I. No. 189 of 1963).
- (2) Subject to this Regulation, the overall width of a vehicle shall not exceed 2.50 metres.
- (3) Until 31 December 2006, the overall width of a refrigerated vehicle, first registered on or before 31 December 1997, may exceed 2.50 metres but shall not exceed 2.60 metres.
- (4) The overall width of a large public service vehicle may exceed 2.50 metres but shall not exceed 2.55 metres.
- (5) The overall width of a goods vehicle or goods trailer with a design gross vehicle weight in excess of 3.5 tonnes may exceed 2.50 metres but shall not exceed 2.55 metres.
- (6) The overall width of a conditioned vehicle may exceed 2.50 metres but shall not exceed 2.60 metres.
- (7) The overall width of a large tractor may exceed 2.50 metres but shall not exceed 2.75 metres.
27. The overall width of a vehicle together with its load, other than loose agricultural produce neither baled nor crated, shall not in any case exceed 2.9 metres and, for the purpose of calculating this dimension, Regulation 23 applies as if the load formed part of the vehicle.
28. (1) The overall length of a mechanically propelled vehicle shall not exceed 12 metres.

- (2) The overall length of a trailer shall not exceed 12 metres.
 - (3) The overall length of an articulated vehicle shall not exceed 16.50 metres.
 - (4) The overall length of an articulated bus shall not exceed 18 metres.
29. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the overall length of a combination of vehicles or of a large tractor drawing 2 trailers shall not exceed 18.75 metres.
- (2) The overall length of a combination of a large tractor drawing 2 trailers operating outside a county or other borough or a town the population of which, as ascertained by the census of population which for the time being is the last published census of population, exceeds 10,000 persons may exceed 18.75 metres but shall not exceed 22 metres.
 - (3) This Regulation does not prohibit the towing of a broken down vehicle which is being towed, in consequence of the breakdown, to the nearest convenient place of safety or repair.
30. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the distance between the axis of the semi-trailer king pin and the rear of the semi-trailer shall not exceed 12 metres and the distance measured horizontally between the axis of the semi-trailer king pin and any point to the front of the semi-trailer shall not exceed 2.04 metres.
- (2) Subject to paragraph (3), in the case of a vehicle transporter, the distance between the axis of the semi-trailer king pin and the rear of the semi-trailer shall not exceed 12.50 metres and the distance measured horizontally between the axis of the semi-trailer king pin and any point to the front of the semi-trailer shall not exceed 4.19 metres.
 - (3) This Regulation does not apply to an articulated vehicle first registered before 1 January 1991 provided the overall length of such articulated vehicle does not exceed 15.5 metres.
31. (1) The distance, measured parallel to the longitudinal axis of a combination of vehicles,
- (a) from the foremost external point of the loading area behind the cabin of the drawing vehicle to the rearmost point of its trailer, less the distance between the rear of the drawing vehicle and the front of its trailer, shall not exceed 15.65 metres.
 - (b) between the rear of the drawing vehicle and the front of its trailer shall not exceed 4.50 metres.
 - (c) from the foremost external point of the loading area behind the cabin of the drawing vehicle to the rearmost point of its trailer shall not exceed 16.40 metres.

32. A vehicle, or a combination of vehicles, which complies with the maximum weights, maximum dimensions and related characteristics set out in respect of the vehicle or combination in Annex I to the Council Directive, when undertaking an international journey, is to be taken to comply with Regulations 3 to 31 inclusive.

33. A load, other than loose agricultural produce neither baled nor crated, on a vehicle shall not project to the side of the vehicle by more than 300 millimetres beyond the extreme projecting points of the vehicle as determined in Regulation 23.

34. A load, other than poles intended for use in connection with telephone or electricity services, on a vehicle which is not drawing a trailer, or on the trailer of a combination of vehicles, shall not project more than 3 metres to the rear beyond the rearmost point of such vehicle or trailer.

35. (1) In this Regulation a warning device means either a red flag or cloth at least 300 millimetres square, or a rigid device having a surface of a similar area coloured red or in two colours, one of which is red and the other is lighter than red.

(2) Where a load projects more than one metre to the rear beyond the rearmost point of a vehicle or trailer, a warning device shall be carried at the rear of the load during the day time.

36. The maximum overall height of a double deck large public service vehicle shall not exceed 4.57 metres.

Part 4 Trailers

37. In this Part –

"mechanically propelled bicycle" means a mechanically propelled cycle with 2 wheels;

"cc" means the international measurement cubic centimetres.

38. (1) Subject to this Regulation, a vehicle, other than a large tractor, shall not draw more than one trailer.

(2) A large tractor shall not draw more than 2 trailers.

39. A trailer or articulated vehicle, other than an articulated bus, shall not be used for the carriage of passengers for reward.

40. (1) A drawbar shall be of such strength and shall be so fitted that a drawn vehicle to which it is fitted cannot become detached while in use as part of a combination of vehicles.

(2) Where the distance separating the nearest points (excluding the drawbar) of the units in a combination of vehicles exceeds 1.5 metres, the drawbar connecting them shall be rendered easily distinguishable to other traffic by means of a warning device which may be in the form of a white flag or cloth at least 300 millimetres square.

(3) This Regulation does not prohibit the towing of a broken down vehicle which is being towed, in consequence of the breakdown, to the nearest convenient place of safety or repair.

41. (1) In the case of a trailer, which can be steered by its own steering gear, an attendant shall be present in the trailer in charge of the steering gear whenever the trailer is being drawn.

(2) Where a large tractor is drawing 2 trailers, an attendant shall be present in the large tractor.

42. (1) Subject to this Regulation, where a side-car is attached to a mechanically propelled bicycle, the side-car shall be –

(a) fitted on the left side of the vehicle, and

(b) attached so that the wheel of the side-car is not wholly outside the space between transverse vertical planes, perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the bicycle, passing through the extreme projecting points at the front and rear of axis of the bicycle.

(2) Paragraph (1) (a) does not apply to a temporarily imported vehicle.

43. (1) Subject to this Regulation and to Regulation 44, a mechanically propelled cycle may not be used to draw any passenger in a trailer, a trailer with an unladen weight exceeding 250 kilograms, or more than one trailer.
- (2) This Regulation does not apply so as to prohibit the towing of a broken down mechanically propelled cycle with one rider on it.
44. (1) Subject to this Regulation, a mechanically propelled cycle with an engine capacity exceeding 125 cc may tow a trailer provided -
- (a) the overall width of the trailer does not exceed one metres,
 - (b) the distance between the rear axle of the mechanically propelled cycle and the rearmost part of the trailer does not exceed 2.5 metres,
 - (c) the mechanically propelled cycle is clearly and indelibly marked in a conspicuous and readily accessible position to indicate the weight of the heaviest trailer which the vehicle is designed to tow, or two thirds of the weight of the mechanically propelled cycle in running order, whichever is less, and
 - (d) the laden weight of the trailer does not exceed 150 kilograms or the weight specified in accordance with subparagraph (c), whichever is less.
- (2) This Regulation does not prohibit a mechanically propelled cycle, equipped with a coupling device in accordance with Chapter 10 of Directive 97/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 1997⁽⁶⁾ towing a trailer which does not exceed the maximum towable mass approved for that type of mechanically propelled cycle in accordance with Directive 2002/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 March 2002⁽⁷⁾.
45. (1) Subject to this Regulation, a mechanically propelled vehicle, an articulated vehicle and a combination of vehicles shall be capable of being driven within an area contained between concentric circles with radii of 12.50 metres and 5.30 metres such that no part of the vehicle or the combination of vehicles projects outside such contained area.
- (2) This Regulation does not apply, until the 31 December 2006, to a vehicle or a combination of vehicles where the mechanically propelled vehicle or the mechanically propelled component of which was first registered on or before 31 December 1997 or where the trailer or semi-trailer of which was first licensed on or before 31 December 1997.

⁶ O.J. L 226, 18.8.97, p.1

⁷ O.J. L 124, 9.5.02, p.1

Part 5
Miscellaneous (Suspension, Wheels, Tyres etc.)

46. (1) In this Part -

"Agreement of 1958" means the United Nations Agreement Concerning The Adoption of Uniform Conditions of Approval and Reciprocal Recognition of Approval for Motor Vehicle Equipment and Parts, done at Geneva on 20 March 1958;

"bias-belted tyre" means a pneumatic tyre of bias-ply type in which the carcass is restricted by a belt comprising two or more layers of substantially inextensible cord material laid at alternate angles close to those of the carcass;

"diagonal, cross-ply or bias-ply tyre" means a pneumatic tyre in which the ply cords extend to the beads and are laid at alternate angles substantially less than 90 degrees to the centre-line of the tread;

"E.C.E. Regulation No. 64" means Regulation No. 64 as set out in United Nations document of reference E/ECE/324: Rev. 1/Add. 63, dated 1 August 1985 and annexed to the Agreement of 1958;

"main grooves" means the broad grooves in the central three-quarters of the width of the tread surface;

"maximum design axle weight" means the weight which the axle is designed or adapted not to exceed;

"maximum speed" means the speed which a mechanically propelled vehicle is incapable, by reason of its construction, of exceeding on the level under its own power;

"pedestrian-controlled vehicle" means a mechanically propelled vehicle, not exceeding 400 kilograms in weight unladen, which is controlled by a pedestrian and which is not constructed or adapted to carry a driver or a passenger;

"radial ply tyre" means a pneumatic type in which the ply cords extend to the beads and are laid substantially at 90 degrees to the centre-line of the tread, the carcass being stabilised by a substantially inextensible circumferential belt;

"recut pneumatic tyre" means a pneumatic tyre in which all or part of its original tread pattern has been cut deeper or burnt deeper or a different tread pattern has been cut deeper or burnt deeper than the original tread pattern;

"section width" means the linear distance between the outsides of the sidewalls of an inflated new tyre excluding elevations due to markings, decorations, or protective bands or ribs;

"structure" in relation to a pneumatic tyre means the technical characteristics of the tyre's carcass including the characteristics and layout of the ply cords;

"temporary use spare tyre or wheel" means a tyre or wheel different from that intended to be fitted to any vehicle for normal use and intended only for temporary use subject to restrictions;

"tie-bar" means any part of a tyre moulded in the tread pattern of the tyre for the purpose of bracing two or more features of such tread pattern;

"tread pattern" means the combination of plain surfaces and grooves extending across the breadth of the tread and round the entire outer circumference of the tyre but excludes any tie-bars or tread wear indicators or features which are designed to wear out substantially before the rest of the pattern under normal conditions of use;

"tread wear indicator" means any bar, not being a tie-bar, projecting from the base of a groove of the tread pattern of a tyre and moulded between two or more features of the tread pattern of a tyre for the purpose of indicating the extent of the wear of such tread pattern;

"wide tyre" means a pneumatic tyre of which the area of contact with the road surface is not less than 300 millimetres in width when measured at right angles to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle;

"works trailer" means a trailer designed for use in private premises and used on a road only in passing from one part of any such premises to another, or to other private premises in the immediate neighbourhood, or in connection with road works while at or in the immediate neighbourhood of the site of such works;

"works truck" means a mechanically propelled vehicle designed for use in private premises and used on a road only in passing from one part of any such premises to another, or to other private premises in the immediate neighbourhood, or in connection with road works while at or in the immediate neighbourhood of the site of such works.

(2) In this Part "rear overhang" means the distance measured horizontally and parallel to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle between -

(a) a vertical plane at right angles to such axis passing through the centre point of the rear axle or, in the case of a vehicle having 3 or more axles, the centre point of a straight line joining the centre points of the rear and second rearmost axles, and

(b) a vertical plane at right angles to such axis passing through the rearmost point of the vehicle, exclusive of any ladder forming part of a turntable fire escape or a luggage carrier fitted to a passenger vehicle having passenger accommodation for not more than 8 persons.

47. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the rear overhang of a vehicle shall not exceed 60 per cent of the length between the plane, perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle, which passes through the centre or centres of the front wheel or wheels and the foremost vertical plane from which rear overhang is to be measured under Regulation 46 (2).
- (2) This Regulation applies to a vehicle other than an articulated vehicle, a tractor, a works truck, a cycle, a vehicle which is steered by movement of the rear wheels, and a vehicle registered before 1 July 1964.
48. (1) Subject to this Regulation, a vehicle shall have a suitable and adequate system of flexible suspension between each wheel and the frame or body of the vehicle or trailer.
- (2) Paragraph (1) does not apply to -
- (a) a cycle,
 - (b) a mobile crane,
 - (c) a tractor not exceeding 4 tonnes in weight unladen where all the unsprung wheels of such tractor are equipped with pneumatic tyres,
 - (d) a works truck,
 - (e) a works trailer,
 - (f) a pedestrian-controlled vehicle where all the wheels of such vehicle are equipped with either pneumatic or soft tyres,
 - (g) a broken down vehicle being drawn in consequence of the breakdown, or an associated towing apparatus,
 - (h) a vehicle used by, or on behalf of, a local authority within the meaning of the Local Government Act of 2001 (No. 37 of 2001) for the construction or maintenance of roads, being a vehicle constructed or adapted for the conveyance of road construction machinery built in as part of such vehicle or otherwise permanently attached thereto and not constructed or adapted for the conveyance of any other load except articles or material used for the purposes of the road construction machinery,
 - (i) a land tractor,
 - (j) a land implement,
 - (k) an agricultural trailer or a trailer used solely for the haulage of felled trees, where all the wheels of such trailer are fitted with pneumatic tyres and where the maximum weight transmitted to the surface of a road by any single axle of the trailer does not exceed 5 tonnes,

(l) a vehicle not exceeding 4 tonnes in weight unladen, or an articulated vehicle the semi-trailer of which does not exceed 4 tonnes in weight unladen, being in any such case a vehicle specially designed for, and mainly used in, operations which necessitate working on rough ground or unmade roads, where all the wheels of the vehicle are equipped with pneumatic tyres and the vehicle does not proceed at a speed exceeding 30 kilometres per hour,

(m) a self-propelled loading shovel where the maximum weight transmitted to the surface of a road by any single axle of the vehicle does not exceed 5 tonnes,

(n) a vehicle consisting of movable engineering plant or equipment designed and constructed for the purposes of engineering operations, subject to the following conditions -

(i) the maximum weight transmitted to the surface of a road by any single axle of the vehicle does not exceed 5 tonnes,

(ii) the vehicle is within a radius of 5 miles from the site of engineering operations in which it is being used,

(iii) the vehicle, if having wheels not fitted with pneumatic tyres, does not proceed at a speed exceeding 10 kilometres per hour, and

(iv) any wheel of the vehicle not having a pneumatic or soft tyre has a smooth tyre with edges rounded to a radius of not less than 12 millimetres and not more than 25 millimetres.

49. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the entire weight of a vehicle shall be transmitted directly to the road surface by circular wheels.

(2) This Regulation does not prohibit the use on a public road of a track-laying land tractor not exceeding 7.25 tonnes in weight unladen, or a track-laying land tractor registered before 1 July 1964 subject in each case to the following conditions -

(a) the parts of the track which come into contact with the road surface shall be flat and have a minimum width of 12 millimetres,

(b) the total area of each track actually in contact with the road surface at any time shall be not less than 230 square centimetres in respect of each tonne of the total weight of the vehicle which is transferred to the road surface by means of the tracks, and

(c) the vehicle shall not draw on a public road any trailer other than a land implement or a trailer conveying a land implement.

50. (1) Subject to this Regulation, all wheels of a vehicle which are in contact with the road surface shall have a rim diameter of not less than 678 millimetres where such wheels are equipped with tyres other than pneumatic tyres.
- (2) This Regulation does not apply to -
- (a) a works truck or a works trailer,
 - (b) a vehicle designed for street cleansing or the disposal of refuse by, or on behalf of, a local authority, and used for such a purpose,
 - (c) a land implement,
 - (d) a broken down vehicle which is being drawn in consequence of the breakdown,
 - (e) a pedestrian-controlled vehicle, or
 - (f) a mobile crane.
51. All wheels and tracks of a vehicle shall be maintained in such condition as to be free from any defect which might in any way cause damage to the surface of a road or cause danger.
52. (1) Subject to this Regulation, the wheels of a vehicle or trailer not mentioned in this Regulation shall be fitted with pneumatic tyres.
- (2) The following vehicles do not need to be fitted with either pneumatic tyres or soft tyres -
- (a) a road roller,
 - (b) a steam propelled land tractor registered before 1 July 1964, which complies with the provisions of the Regulations relating to tyres under Part II of the Road Traffic Act 1933 (No. 11 of 1933) which were in operation immediately prior to the commencement of the Regulations of 1963, or
 - (c) a vehicle consisting of movable engineering plant or equipment specially designed and constructed for the purpose of engineering operations, which complies with the conditions specified in Regulation 48 (2) (n).

(3) All wheels of the following vehicles shall be fitted with either pneumatic tyres or soft tyres -

- (a) a land tractor,
- (b) a works truck,
- (c) a vehicle, other than a passenger vehicle, cycle or goods vehicle, which does not exceed one tonne in weight unladen,
- (d) a vehicle which exceeds 4 tonnes in weight unladen and which is mainly used in operations which necessitate working on rough ground or on unmade roads,
- (e) a pedestrian-controlled vehicle, or
- (f) a mobile crane.

(4) All wheels of the following trailers shall be fitted with either pneumatic tyres or soft tyres -

- (a) a land implement,
- (b) a trailer consisting of movable engineering plant or equipment specially designed and constructed for the purpose of engineering operations, which complies with the conditions specified in Regulation 50 (2) (n),
- (c) a works trailer being drawn at a speed not exceeding 10 kilometres per hour,
- (d) a broken down vehicle, or associated towing ambulance, being drawn in consequence of the breakdown at a speed not exceeding 20 kilometres per hour, or
- (e) a trailer being drawn at a speed not exceeding 10 kilometres per hour by a vehicle which is not required by these Regulations to have all its wheels fitted with pneumatic tyres.

53. Pneumatic tyres on an axle of a vehicle shall be designed and maintained so as to be capable of supporting the maximum design axle weight for that axle.

54. (1) Subject to paragraph (5), pneumatic tyres of different types of structure shall not be fitted to the same axle of a vehicle.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (3) and (5), a vehicle having only 2 axles, each of which is equipped with one or 2 single wheels, shall not be fitted with -

(a) a diagonal-ply tyre or a bias-belted tyre on its rear axle if a radial-ply tyre is fitted on its front axle, or

(b) a diagonal-ply tyre on its rear axle if a bias-belted tyre is fitted on the front axle.

(3) Paragraph (2) does not apply to any vehicle fitted with wide tyres or to a vehicle which has a maximum speed not exceeding 48 kilometres per hour.

(4) Subject to paragraph (5), pneumatic tyres fitted to the steerable axles and the non-steerable drive axles of a vehicle shall all be of the same type of structure.

(5) This Regulation does not prohibit the fitting of a temporary use spare tyre or wheel to a passenger vehicle with passenger accommodation for not more than 8 passengers provided the passenger vehicle so fitted is not driven at a speed exceeding 80 kilometres per hour.

(6) A temporary use spare tyre or wheel referred to in paragraph (5) shall exhibit in a manner prescribed by ECE Regulation No. 64 the following information –

<p>CAUTION! TEMPORARY USE ONLY! MAX. 80 km/h! REPLACE BY NORMAL WHEEL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. DO NOT COVER THIS LABEL IN USE!</p>

55. (1) Subject to this Regulation, a vehicle shall not be used on a road if any wheel is fitted with a pneumatic tyre and -

(a) the tyre is unsuitable having regard to the use to which the vehicle is being put or to the types of tyres fitted to its other wheels,

(b) the tyre is not fit for the use to which the vehicle is being put, due to the degree of inflation of the tyre.

(c) the tyre has a cut in excess of 25 millimetres or 10 per cent of the section width of the tyre, whichever is the lesser, measured in any direction on the outside of the tyre and deep enough to reach the ply or cord,

(d) the tyre has any lump, bulge or tear caused by separation or partial failure of its structure,

(e) the tyre has any of the ply or cord exposed,

(f) in the case of vehicles other than, pedestrian controlled vehicles, mechanically propelled cycles, and vehicles first registered before 31 December 1930, the main grooves of the tread pattern of the tyre do not have a depth of at least 1.6 millimetres throughout a continuous band around the entire outer circumference of the tyre,

(g) in the case of mechanically propelled cycles and vehicles first registered before 31 December 1930 the grooves of the tread pattern do not have a depth of at least one millimetre throughout the entire breadth and around the entire circumference of the tyre, or

(h) the tyre is not maintained in such condition as to be fit for the use to which the vehicle is being put or has a defect which might in any way cause damage to persons or damage to the surface of the road.

(2) This Regulation does not prohibit -

(a) the use of a vehicle or trailer fitted with a tyre which is deflated or not fully inflated provided the tyre and the wheel to which it is fitted are so constructed as to make the tyre in that condition fit for use in such condition and the outer sides of the wall of the tyre are marked accordingly,

(b) the use of a temporary use spare tyre or wheel, which complies with ECE Regulation No. 64 on a passenger vehicle with accommodation for not more than 8 passengers, provided the vehicle is driven at a speed not exceeding 80 kilometres per hour, or

(c) the towing of a broken down vehicle from being drawn at a speed not exceeding 32 kilometres per hour to the nearest convenient place of safety or repair.

56. (1) A recut pneumatic tyre shall not be fitted to any wheel of the following:-

(a) a passenger carrying vehicle with an unladen weight of less than 3050 kilograms,

(b) a goods vehicle with an unladen weight of less than 2540 kilograms or where the diameter of the rim of the wheel is less than 405 millimetres,

or

(c) a goods trailer with an unladen weight of less than 1020 kilograms.

(d) a recut pneumatic tyre shall not be fitted to any wheel of a mechanically propelled cycle.

(2) A recut pneumatic tyre shall not be fitted to any wheel of a vehicle or trailer if –

(a) the tyre's ply or cord has been cut or exposed by the recutting process,

(b) the tyre has been wholly or partially recut in a pattern other than the manufacturer's recut tread pattern, or

(c) the tyre has not been specified by the tyre manufacturer as being suitable for recutting.

57. (1) This Regulation applies to a mechanically propelled vehicle which exceeds 2 tonnes in weight unladen and a trailer or semi-trailer which exceeds one ton in weight unladen.

(2) A mechanically propelled vehicle, trailer and semi-trailer to which this Regulation applies shall have its weight unladen painted or otherwise clearly marked on its rear or left side.

58. (1) Subject to this Regulation, a vehicle having more than 4 wheels and a semi-trailer having more than 2 wheels shall be provided with such compensating arrangement as will ensure that all the wheels will remain in contact with the road surface and will not under the most adverse conditions be subject to abnormal variations of load.

(2) This Regulation does not apply to any steerable wheel of a vehicle where the weight transmitted to the surface of a road by such wheel does not exceed 2 tonnes.

Part 6

Special Permits

59. (1) In this Regulation "appropriate local authority" means the city council or the county council in whose functional area a public road is situated in respect of which a person may apply for a permit.
- (2) Any person may apply to the appropriate local authority for the issue of a special permit (in this Regulation referred to as a "permit") authorising any particular vehicle, or particular vehicles, the use of which would contravene any of the requirements of these Regulations, to be used on a specified public road or roads or all the public roads within a specified area within the functional area of the authority notwithstanding such contravention.
- (3) An application for a permit shall specify and describe any vehicles for which the permit is required, the nature, dimensions and weight of any load or loads to be carried, particulars of the journey or journeys to be undertaken and such other information as the local authority concerned may require.
- (4) (a) Before making an application for a permit, the applicant shall give to the Commissioner of the Garda Síochána (in this Regulation referred to as the "Commissioner") 4 clear days' notice of such application, and such notice shall be accompanied by a copy of the application for the permit. Saturday, Sunday and any public holiday (within the meaning of the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 (No. 20 of 1997)) is not included in the reckoning of the 4 days' notice.
- (b) Where a person is concerned with public transport, lighting, water supply, communications or some other similar public service and the Commissioner is of the opinion that the use on public roads of vehicles belonging to such person, the use of which would contravene these Regulations, is likely to be urgently necessary for the more efficient carrying on of such public service, the Commissioner may exempt this person from full compliance with subparagraph (a).
- (5) An application for a permit shall contain an undertaking by the applicant to refund to the local authority charged with the maintenance of the road the amount of any damage caused to any public road by the use of the vehicle under the permit which may be granted as a result of the application, provided that a claim for such refund is made by such local authority before the expiration of twelve months from the last date when a vehicle is driven on the public road under the permit.
- (6) Where an application for a permit is made, the appropriate local authority shall, before issuing the permit, satisfy itself that the undertaking in such application to refund damage can be enforced, if necessary, and for that purpose may require the applicant, as a condition to the issue of the permit, either to deposit with it (or in the case of a public road in the charge of an urban district council, with that council) a sum sufficient to cover the amount of such damage, or to furnish other sufficient security.

(7) Where an application for a permit is made, the appropriate local authority, where it is satisfied that the requirements of this Regulation have been complied with and after consideration of any representations made to them by the Commissioner, may issue such permit.

(8) Where a permit relates to a public road in the charge of a town council, the appropriate local authority shall inform that council of the issue of the permit.

(9) A permit shall contain the following particulars -

(a) a specification and description of any vehicle to which the permit relates,

(b) the nature, dimensions and weight of any vehicle to which the permit relates, and of any load or loads to be carried,

(c) details of the journey or route and itinerary to be used in the making of the journey.

(10) A local authority that issues a permit may attach to the permit any limitations, restrictions or conditions (including in particular conditions as to weight, dimensions, speed, number of trailers, springs, tyres and wheels) which they consider advisable to prevent unnecessary damage to public roads or which, after consultation with the Commissioner, they consider expedient to protect other road users.

(11) A permit may, in addition to specifying a particular public road in a specified area, authorise the occasional use of any vehicle to which it relates on other public roads not specified, subject to compliance with conditions specified by the appropriate local authority, including in particular the condition that before using a vehicle on any such other public road, the person in charge of the vehicle shall inform, orally or in writing, an officer of the appropriate local authority designated for that purpose by the local authority and shall comply with any instructions given by such officer.

(12) A permit shall at all times be carried on the vehicle to which it relates, or on the vehicle drawing the trailer to which it relates.

(13) A permit is valid for the period of 12 months from the date of issue of the permit or for such lesser period as may be stated in it.

(14) Where a vehicle, in respect of which a permit has been issued, is being used in contravention of any condition attached to the permit, the appropriate local authority which issued the permit may withdraw it.

(15) Where a local authority proposes to withdraw a permit it shall give 21 day's notice of such intention to withdraw it to the holder and shall consider any representations made by the holder within that period.

(16) A special permit issued under article 17 of the Regulations of 1963 and which is in force immediately before the making of these Regulations continues in force as if issued under this Regulation.

60 (1) The Minister for Transport may issue to any person a special permit authorising the use in a public place of a particular vehicle or a particular combination of vehicles notwithstanding that their use would contravene these Regulations or the Regulations of 1963.

(2) In issuing a special permit referred to in paragraph (1), the Minister may specify limitations, restrictions or conditions as to-

(a) public places in which the vehicle may be used,

(b) the number of passengers which may be carried in the vehicle and the method of calculating that number,

(c) the weights, dimensions or other characteristics of the vehicle, and

(d) the construction or equipment of the vehicle.

(3) A special permit issued under article 97 of the Regulations of 1963 and which is in force immediately before the making of these Regulations continues in force as if issued under this Regulation.

**Part 7
Revocations**

61. (1) The following are revoked:
- (a) Part II and article 97 of the Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 1963 (S.I. No. 190 of 1963), and
 - (b) the Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulations 1986 (S.I. 442 of 1986).

**GIVEN under the Official Seal
of the Minister for Transport,**

16 January 2003

John Murphy

**A person authorised under section 15 of the
Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924 to
authenticate the seal of the Minister for
Transport.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The main purpose of these regulations is to increase the maximum permissible drive axle weight of a vehicle to 11.5 tonnes and the maximum weight laden of certain vehicles and combinations. The heaviest configuration (i.e. articulated vehicles and truck and trailer combinations having 6 or more axles) is generally increased to 44 tonnes subject to safeguards in the realms of suspension systems, braking systems and other design, construction and use criteria. The use of the metric tonne as a unit of weight is introduced.

The technical controls on the laden weight of articulated vehicles with a particular number of axles - i.e. the axle spacing controls - are amended so as to be determined by the characteristics of the semi-trailer alone (the distance from the king pin to the centre of the rear axle) rather than being a function of the entire combination. Various other technical amendments are incorporated which align the regulations more closely with the provisions previously applicable only to vehicles in international traffic originally introduced in S.I. 442 of 1986 which is revoked, thereby revoking the amending provisions in S.I. No 51 of 2001.

These regulations also revoke and re-state Part 2 and Article 97 of the Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles), Regulations, 1963 – 2002 including Article 17 provisions relating to the issue of permits for abnormal loads. The revocation and re-statement of Article 97 of the 1963 Regulations, which relates to more general permits, has been necessitated by its reference to items which can also give rise to applications for permits under Article 17.

The general prohibition on the towing of trailers by motorcycles is amended to allow the towing of a trailer under specified conditions relating to the motorcycle and to the trailer.