

# **Vehicle Standard (Australian Design Rule 62/02 – Mechanical Connections Between Vehicles) 2007 Amendment 1**

Made under section 7 of the Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989

## **Explanatory Statement**

Issued by the authority of the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional  
Development and Local Government

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## **1. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

*Vehicle Standard (Australian Design Rule 62/02 — Mechanical Connections Between Vehicles) 2007* is made under the *Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989* (the Act). The Act enables the Australian Government to establish nationally uniform standards for road vehicles when they are first supplied to the market in Australia. The Act applies to such vehicles whether they are manufactured in Australia or are imported as new or second hand vehicles.

The making of the vehicle standards necessary for the Act's effective operation is provided for in section 7 which empowers the Minister to "determine vehicle standards for road vehicles or vehicle components".

Vehicle Standard (Australian Design Rule 62/02 – Mechanical Connections Between Vehicles) 2007 (ADR 62/02) was originally determined in 2007.

## **2. CONTENT AND EFFECT OF ADR 62/02 AND AMENDMENTS**

### **2.1. Overview of the ADR**

The function of this vehicle standard is to specify requirements for mechanical connections (couplings) between vehicles, to ensure positive mechanical engagement and to prohibit disengagement during use.

### **2.2. Effect of the ADR Amendments**

This amendment provides industry with an optional method to specify the size of safety chains. It also corrects three drafting errors. The changes are as follows:

- Inclusion of a safety chain size table, similar to that contained within the previous version of this ADR. The table offers an alternative to sizing of a safety chain, without having to directly access the referenced Australian Standard. This would not increase the stringency of the ADR.
- Re-instatement of safety chain attachment point strength requirements as contained within the previous version of this ADR. These strength requirements were inadvertently increased in the drafting of ADR 62/02. This would not increase the stringency of the ADR.
- Correction of drafting errors in the longitudinal test loads for heavy trailers and converter dollies, and positioning of the coupling for vehicles designed for road train use. These would not increase the stringency of the ADR.

Overall, this amendment is expected to improve the ease of use of the ADR and apply the test load requirements that were originally agreed to by the relevant working group. The amendment mostly affects heavy commercial vehicles.

## **3. BEST PRACTICE REGULATION**

### **3.1. Business Cost Calculator**

There is no expected increase in cost to manufacturers, as the proposed amendments do not increase the stringency of the ADR.

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### 3.2. General Consultation Arrangements

It has been longstanding practice to consult widely on proposed new or amended vehicle standards. For many years there has been active collaboration between the Federal and the State/Territory Governments, as well as consultation with industry and consumer groups. Much of the consultation takes place within institutional arrangements established for this purpose. The analysis and documentation prepared in a particular case, and the bodies consulted, depend on the degree of impact the new or amended standard is expected to have on industry or road users.

Depending on the nature of the proposed changes, consultation could involve the Technical Liaison Group (TLG), Transport Agencies Chief Executives (TACE), and the Australian Transport Council (ATC).

- TLG consists of representatives of government (Australian and State/Territory), the manufacturing and operational arms of the industry (including organisations such as the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries and the Australian Trucking Association) and of representative organisations of consumers and road users (particularly through the Australian Automobile Association).
- TACE consists of the chief executives of Australian and State/Territory departments of transport and road vehicle administrations.
- ATC consists of the Australian, State/Territory and New Zealand Ministers with responsibility for transport issues.

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government process editorial changes and changes to correct errors without reference to other agencies. This approach is only used where the amendments do not vary the intent of the vehicle standard.

Proposals that are regarded as significant need to be supported by a Regulation Impact Statement meeting the requirements of the Office of Best Practice Regulation as published in *Best Practice Regulation Handbook* and the Council of Australian Governments *Principles and Guidelines for National Standard Setting and Regulatory Action for Ministerial Councils and Standard-Setting Bodies*.

### 3.3. Specific Consultation Arrangements for this Vehicle Standard

The amendment was discussed within the TLG at its 26 November 2009 meeting, where it was agreed to by all members.

As the amendment is minor in nature, and does not raise the stringency of the ADR, TLG members agreed that further consultation was not necessary through the public comment process. The state and territory representatives were also confident that they represented the views of their jurisdictions and that there was no need for further consultation through TACE or ATC.

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#### 3.4. Regulation Impact Statement

As the proposed amendment does not increase the stringency of the ADR, a Regulation Impact Statement is not required.

Since the decision is made by the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government without reference to the ATC and the proposal is not considered significant, the Office of Best Practice Regulation requirements have been met for this regulatory proposal (OBPR Reference No. 10684).