

An easy guide to help your low ATM trailer pass inspection

Low ATM

Trailers

# For further information please phone the Vehicle Standards Unit on 6166 3261 or email [vehicle.standards@stategrowth.tas.](mailto:vehicle.standards@stategrowth.tas.)gov.au

[www.transport.tas.gov.au](http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/)

**Note:-**

## Once your trailer has passed inspection by an Approved Inspection Station, you’re Application for registration of a light motor vehicle or trailer is **only valid for 30 days** after passing inspection.

### This is a guideline only. At all times the appropriate legislation currently in force takes precedence.

**What is a low ATM trailer?**

A low ATM trailer, also known as a light trailer, is a trailer with an Aggregate Trailer Mass (ATM) of 4500kg or less.

Caravans (including tiny homes) are trailers.

ATM is the total mass of the trailer when carrying the maximum load specified by the manufacturer. It is assessed by the manufacturer taking into consideration all of the trailers components such as the coupling rating, braking system, draw bar, chassis design, suspension ratings and wheel and tyre ratings etc.

### Inspecting your trailer

Below is a list of items a Vehicle Examiner will check when inspecting your trailer.

### Maximum dimensions *(includes external fixtures and overhangs)*

Maximum width – 2.5 metres.

Maximum drawbar length – 8.5 metres.

Maximum length of a pig trailer – 12.2 metres.

Maximum height – 4.6 metres for a livestock trailer and 4.3 metres for all other trailers.

Rear overhang (the distance from the center of the axle, or axle group for multiple axles, to the rear most point of the trailer) – The lesser value of the length of the load carrying area forward of the center of the axle (or axle group for multiple axles) or 3.7 metres.

### Rear lights

A light trailer built after June 1973 must have at least one tail light, one brake light and one direction indicator fitted toward each side of the rear of the trailer. Light boards are not to be used as the primary lighting unless they are permanently mounted to the trailer.

### Electrical check

All lighting, lenses, and electric brake assemblies must be in working order and work effectively. Faded lenses reduce effectiveness. The trailer electrical plug must be in good operational condition with no damage to the locking tabs.

### Side marking lamps

These lights indicate the presence and length of a trailer. The longer and wider the trailer, the more lights the trailer may require. Refer to Vehicle Standards Bulletin 1 (VSB1) for a more detailed description of lighting requirements. Web Link provided at the end of this guide.

### Reflectors

Trailers must be fitted with:

* one red rear facing reflector, at each side of the rear of the trailer.
* one forward facing white reflector at each side of the front of the trailer.
* orange reflectors on both sides of the trailer.

Only rear reflectors can be triangular.

### Number plate

There must be an area to affix a number plate to the rear of the trailer, in an upright position, parallel to the vehicle axle/s and be legible from a distance of 20 metres, including when illuminated by the number plate lamp.

### Tyres

Tyres must have at least 1.5 mm of tread depth, in a continuous band across the tread surface around the full circumference of the tyre. They must have no deep cuts, bulges or exposed cords. They must have the appropriate speed and load rating for the vehicle. Tyres must not have been re-grooved.

### Inside and Outside of Road Wheels

Rims and hubs must not be cracked, buckled, corroded or have any broken or missing wheel studs or nuts.

### Wheel bearings

Wheel bearings must be adjusted correctly. They are not to be leaking grease or, feel rough or noisy when spinning the wheel.

### Brake requirements

All trailers manufactured after 1 July 1988 with a Gross Trailer Mass (GTM) greater than 750kg require brakes as follows,

Trailers with a GTM between 750kg and 2000kg require brakes on one axle only.

Trailers with a GTM greater than 2000kg require brakes on all axles and must include a break away system that automatically applies the brakes in the event the trailer becomes detached from the towing vehicle.

Trailers manufactured prior to 1 July 1988 with a GTM greater than 2000kg require brakes that automatically apply and hold on when detached from towing vehicle.

### Brake Components

All components of the braking system must be mounted securely and must be in working order. If fitted with a hydraulic system, it must be free of any fluid leaks and not incorporate copper brake lines.

### Body Panels, Chassis, Frame, Exterior Fixtures

Exterior body work, frame, fittings and fixtures must be securely attached and not have any sharp edges or protrusions that may injure someone coming into contact with the trailer. The chassis including the drawbar must be structurally sound and free of cracks twists and rust.

### Mudguards

Mudguards must be fitted to all wheels and must cover the full width of the tyre. The lower edge of any mudguard (including mud flap) must be no higher than 230 mm above the ground (parked on level ground). Mudguards on off road trailers may be up to 300 mm off the ground.

### Suspension

All components must be intact, free from cracks, breakage, corrosion and excessive wear. Components must be correctly aligned and in good working order.

### Coupling

Trailers that do not exceed 3.5 tonnes ATM must have a quick release coupling which is designed to be engaged and disengaged without the use of tools. It must be of a positive locking type with provision for a second independent locking device. The locking must be readily verifiable by visual inspection. All trailers built after July 1991 must have ADR 62 compliant couplings that must have appropriate markings. Further information can be found from the links at end of this guide.

### Safety Chain

The chain must be permanently attached to the draw bar. The trailer may require more than one safety chain. All trailers manufactured after 1 July 1991 must be fitted with safety chains that meet the relevant Australian Standard. When the trailer is being towed, the chain must not drag along the ground.

### Doors, Gates, Flap

Any gate, door or flap must be securely attached and able to be secured in the closed position.

### Caravans

### Definition

A caravan is an enclosed trailer primarily designed and suitable for human habitation whilst stationary.

### Fire Extinguisher

A caravan must have a fire extinguisher that is easily accessible in an emergency, securely mounted in a suitable location within each living area. The extinguisher must be filled and charged.

### LPG

If LPG is fitted in the caravan, the caravan must have a gas installation compliance certificate.

### New Trailers

The following information applies to new trailers, first time registration anywhere in Australia.

### Register of Approved Vehicles (RAV)

A trailer manufactured from 1 July 2023 onwards must also have its VIN recorded on the RAV to be eligible for registration. Further information can be found from the links at the end of this guide.

### Trailer plate (vehicle plate and tyre placard)

All trailers manufactured from 1 January 1989 onwards must have affixed a vehicle plate and tyre placard, these plates may be incorporated into a single plate commonly known as a trailer plate. Trailer plates can be purchased from Service Tasmania. The plate must be permanently affixed with pop rivets or hammer drive screws, adhesives and self-tapping screws are not considered permanently affixed.

### Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)

All trailers manufactured from 1 January 1989 must have a decodable 17 digit alpha numeric VIN. This must be stamped or engraved on the trailer plate and must also be stamped into a prominent non removable part of the trailer (generally the drawbar).

### Chassis number

All trailers manufactured before 1 January 1989 must have a chassis number stamped into a prominent non removable part of the trailer (generally the drawbar). Chassis numbers may be any combination or length of alpha numeric digits.

### Assessment of Unladen Mass

Unladen mass is the total weight of the trailer when not carrying a load.

If your trailer is either a tandem or tri axle, you must have it weighed at a weigh bridge before taking it to an AIS for inspection. For the location of your nearest weigh bridge, please visit: <http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/vehicles/vehicl>e\_inspections/ais/weighbridges\_locations

### Additional Information

### VSB1 *(revision 6 applies to all new trailers from 1 July 2023)*

https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure-transport-vehicles/vehicles/vehicle-design-regulation/rvs/bulletins

**Vehicle information bulletins**

<https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/vehicles_and_vehicle_inspections/Vehicle_information_bulletins>

**Australian Design Rules**

https://infrastructure.gov.au/roads/motor/design/adr\_online.aspx

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