

## Heavy Vehicle National Law Review

The National Transport Commission is conducting a first-principles review of the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) on behalf of Australia's transport ministers. The goal is to deliver a modern, outcome-focused law for regulating heavy vehicle operations in Australia.

### Issue

#### Route access

- The key objective is to achieve simpler and more transparent access options. General access limits have not changed since the 1990s and mass and dimension limits have not kept pace with advances in the heavy vehicle fleet, despite vehicles becoming safer, more efficient and longer over the past 30 years.
- The current process results in the issue of a large number of permits, creates administrative and compliance burdens for operators and road managers. It can also unduly delay the granting of access. The permit application process is not risk-based and requires almost every application to be made via the same process.
- Some local governments have only limited resources to assess roads and make timely decisions.
- In Australia, each state and Territory has different requirements for pilots and escorts required for OSOM movements. This includes the use of pilots and escorts that work together to manage traffic both ahead and behind the OSOM vehicle.

### Policy options

#### Option-9.1 – Enhanced general access

- This option could allow vehicles to operate at up to concessional mass limits (CML) and up to 20-metre lengths, provided those vehicles meet a set of criteria such as specific vehicle safety features or emissions standards.

#### Option-9.2a, 9.2b, 9.2c, 9.2d, 9.2f, 9.3b and 9.4 – Restricted access decisions

- Under the future law, operators could seek a process review (not a decision-merit review) of access decision-making with either the NHVR or the relevant jurisdiction-based administrative tribunal. This will encourage transparency and ensure due consideration is given to access requests.
- Access decision-making processes could be moved from primary legislation to regulations and standards, allowing refinement as needed while maintaining ministerial oversight.
- Operators could seek a process review of access decision-making which could encourage transparency and ensure due consideration is given to access requests. This could involve allowing road managers to delegate decision-making and consolidating and sharing authorisations and access precedents to create a single source of truth geospatial map.
- The future HVNL may classify vehicles by the relevant factors rather than applying all possible factors to create a singular classification for each vehicle combination to make the law clearer for operators and enforcement.

### Option-9.5 – Pilots and escorts

- The future HVNL could established a harmonised pilots and escort scheme, administered by the NHVR. This may allow authorised officers to have suitable traffic management powers when undertaking escort duties.

### Read more

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- You can read more about:
  - 9.1a: Increase in GML to CML for all operators in the [RIS](#)
  - 9.1b: Increase in GML to CML – enrolment in the [RIS](#)
  - 9.1c: Increase in GML to CML – on board mass installed in the [RIS](#)
  - 9.1d: Increase in general access length in the [RIS](#)
  - 9.1e: Introduce “enhanced general access” with more weight, length and height for vehicles with increased safety features and on board mass in the [RIS](#) and [HVNL 2.0](#).
- You can read more about:
  - 9.2a: Recognise precedent and expand expedited process for equivalent/lower risk applications in the [RIS](#) and [HVNL 2.0](#).
  - 9.2b: Allow for opt-in road manager delegation in the [RIS](#) and [HVNL 2.0](#).
  - 9.2c: Geospatial map given authority in the law in the [RIS](#) and [HVNL 2.0](#).
  - 9.2d: A risk-based approach to vehicle classes in the [RIS](#) and [HVNL 2.0](#).
  - 9.2e: Amendment to third party consent requirements - read in the [RIS](#)
  - 9.2f: Amendment to access decision criteria to allow access decisions to include whole-of-network impacts and strategic network management in the [RIS](#) and [HVNL 2.0](#).
  - 9.3b: Review of access decisions in the [RIS](#) and [HVNL 2.0](#).
  - 9.4 Increasing the responsiveness of access decision-making in the [RIS](#) and [HVNL 2.0](#).
- You can read more about:
  - 9.5a: National scheme – single tiered pilot and escort accreditation in the [RIS](#) and [HVNL 2.0](#).
  - 9.5b: National scheme – dual-tiered pilot and escort accreditation in the [RIS](#) and [HVNL 2.0](#).

### Have your say

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- The NTC will continue to engage with stakeholders providing opportunities to help finalise the HVNL reform options.
- Make a short submission. Tell us what options you prefer, least prefer and why on the [HVNL microsite](#).