



# TRANSPORT SAFETY PACK

## Basic Load Restraint Guide



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## Basic Load Restraint Guide

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#### Disclaimer:

Lachlan Commodities has provided this information as a brief guide to the basic requirements which we recommend to be implemented to minimise the risk of breach under the relevant laws and regulations. The implementation of this guide itself does not guarantee full compliances with all relevant laws and regulations. This information must be used as a guide only, and the individual needs against the laws and regulations should be verified with their own legal representatives.

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## Basic Load Restraint Guide

### 1.0 Load Restraint

#### 1.1 Purpose of a Load Restraint Guide

As regulations and technical jargon can be tedious to read, the LRG is published to summarise and inform everyone about the basic safety principles that should be followed to ensure the safe carriage of loads on road vehicles. The guide has been reformatted and rewritten to make it simpler and easier to understand. The load restraint performance standards in the second edition of the guide remain unchanged from the 1994 first edition.

#### 1.2 Importance of load restraint

Every year Australians are injured and killed in crashes caused by unrestrained loads. This occurs when:

- Heavy objects fall from vehicles on to other vehicles or pedestrians.
- Drivers swerve to avoid falling or fallen items from vehicles.
- Spillage on roads from lost loads causes vehicles to skid and lose control.
- Unrestrained loads crash into vehicle cabins during emergency braking.
- Vehicles overturn because of loads shifting while cornering.

#### 1.3 Load placement and restraint requirements

The National Road Transport Reform (Mass and Loading) Regulations 1995 require that:

- A load on a vehicle must not be placed in a way that makes the vehicle unstable or unsafe.
- A load on a vehicle must be secured so that it is unlikely to fall or be dislodged from the vehicle.
- An appropriate method must be used to restrain the load on a vehicle.

Comparable requirements apply in all States and Territories and you are advised to check the relevant legislation.

With proper loading techniques, injuries caused by unrestrained loads can be avoided. A load that is restrained so it doesn't shift is required to withstand forces of at least:

- > 80% of its weight in the forward direction;
- > 50% of its weight sideways and rearwards,
- > 20% of its weight vertically.

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### 2.0 Chain of Responsibilities

#### 2.1 Roles and responsibilities of parties in the supply chain

Under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL), everyone in the supply chain has an obligation to ensure breaches of road transport laws do not occur. Duty holders need to make sure that their action or inaction does not contribute to or encourage breaches of the HVNL. If a party's actions, inactions or demands cause or contribute to an offence, they can be held legally accountable.

#### 2.2 Operator/manager/scheduler responsibilities

**As an operator, manager, or scheduler of a business involved in road transport, your responsibilities also include ensuring that:**

- rosters and schedules do not require drivers to exceed driving hours regulations or speed limits
- you keep records of your drivers' activities, including work and rest times
- you take all reasonable steps to ensure drivers do not work while impaired by fatigue or drive in breach of their work or rest options
- vehicles are regularly maintained, and if speed limiters are fitted they are functioning properly
- vehicles are not loaded in a way which exceeds mass or dimension limits
- drivers moving freight containers have a valid Container Weight Declaration
- loads are appropriately restrained with appropriate restraint equipment (see the Load restraint guide for more information).

#### 2.3 Consignor/consignee responsibilities

As consignor or consignee your responsibilities include ensuring that:

- loads do not exceed vehicle mass or dimension limits
- goods carried on your behalf are able to be appropriately secured
- operators carrying freight containers have a valid Container Weight Declaration
- your delivery requirements do not require or encourage drivers to;
  - exceed the speed limits
  - exceed regulated driving hours
  - fail to meet the minimum rest requirements
  - drive while impaired by fatigue

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### 2.4 Loading manager/loader/packer responsibilities

Loading managers, loaders and packers must ensure that loading a fatigue-regulated heavy vehicle will not cause or contribute to the driver driving while impaired by fatigue or in contravention of road transport laws.

Loading manager responsibilities include:

- working with other off-road parties to make reasonable arrangements to manage loading/unloading time slots
- ensuring vehicles are loaded/unloaded as quickly and efficiently as possible
- putting systems in place for unexpected jobs – for example where there have been unexpected road delays.

Loader responsibilities include ensuring a vehicle's load:

- does not exceed vehicle mass or dimension limits
- does not cause the vehicle to exceed mass limits
- is placed in a way so it does not become unstable, move or fall off the vehicle.

Unreliable weight information makes it difficult for drivers to comply with the law. Packer responsibilities include ensuring:

- documentation about the vehicle's load is not false or misleading
- any goods packed in a freight container do not cause the container's gross weight or safety approval rating to be exceeded.

### 2.5 Driver/owner-driver responsibilities

As a driver your responsibilities include making sure that you:

- comply with relevant fatigue management work and rest laws and procedures to implement them
- make sure you make the most of your rest breaks by sleeping in dark, quiet and comfortable places
- respond to changes in circumstances (such as delays) and report these to your base (if possible) to implement short-term fatigue management measures
- ensure your vehicle does not exceed mass or dimension limits
- ensure your load is appropriately restrained

Additional responsibilities for owner-drivers include:

- making sure your drivers are medically fit to drive
- making sure your vehicles are roadworthy and well maintained
- keeping full and accurate records as required by law