

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

**1986 No. 1078**

The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986

PART II

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE CONSTRUCTION,  
EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES

A

DIMENSIONS AND MANOEUVRABILITY

**Length**

7.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), the overall length of a vehicle or combination of vehicles of a class specified in an item in column 2 of the Table shall not exceed the maximum length specified in that item in column 3 of the Table, the overall length in the case of a combination of vehicles being calculated in accordance with regulation 81(g) and (h).

**TABLE**

(regulation 7(1))

<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Item</i>	<i>Class of vehicle</i>	<i>Maximum length (metres)</i>
	<i>Vehicle Combinations</i>	
[ <sup>F1</sup> 1	A motor vehicle (other than a motor vehicle such as is mentioned in item 1A) drawing one trailer which is not a semi-trailer.	18.75
1A	Subject to paragraph (3C), a motor vehicle manufactured before 1st June 1998 and drawing one trailer, where the combination does not meet the requirements of paragraph (5A) and the trailer is not a semi-trailer.	18]
2	An articulated bus.	[ <sup>F2</sup> 18.75]
[ <sup>F3</sup> 2A	A bus drawing a trailer	18.75]
3	An articulated vehicle [ <sup>F4</sup> the semi-trailer of which does not meet the requirements of [ <sup>F5</sup> para-graph (6)] paragraph (6) and is not a low loader.]	15.5
	<i>Motor vehicles</i>	

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1	2	3
<i>Item</i>	<i>Class of vehicle</i>	<i>Maximum length (metres)</i>
[ <sup>F63</sup> A	An articulated vehicle, the semi-trailer of which meets the requirements of paragraph (6) and is not a low loader.	16.5]
[ <sup>F63</sup> B	An articulated vehicle, the semi-trailer of which is a low loader.	18]
[ <sup>F73</sup> C	An articulated vehicle, the semi-trailer of which meets the requirements of paragraph (6), is not a low loader and is carrying one or more containers or swap bodies up to a total maximum length of 45 feet as part of an intermodal transport operation.	16.65]
4	A wheeled motor vehicle [ <sup>F8</sup> other than a bus].	12
[ <sup>F9</sup> 4A	A bus with two axles	13.5]
[ <sup>F10</sup> 4B	A bus with more than two axles	15]
5	A track-laying motor vehicle.	9.2
	<i>Trailers</i>	
6	An agricultural trailed appliance manufactured on or after 1st December 1985.	15
7	A semi-trailer manufactured on or after 1st May 1983 [ <sup>F11</sup> which does not meet the requirements of paragraph (6) and is not a low loader].	12.2
[ <sup>F12</sup> 7A	A composite trailer drawn by—  (a) a goods vehicle being a motor vehicle having a maximum gross weight exceeding 3500 kg; or  (b) an agricultural motor vehicle	14.04]
8	A trailer [ <sup>F13</sup> (not being a semi-trailer or composite trailer)] with at least 4 wheels which is—  (a) drawn by a goods vehicle being a motor vehicle having a maximum gross weight exceeding 3500 kg; or  (b) an agricultural trailer.	12
9	Any other trailer not being an agricultural trailed appliance or a semi-trailer.	7

(2) In the case of a motor vehicle drawing one trailer where—

- (a) the motor vehicle is a showman's vehicle as defined in paragraph 7 of Schedule 3 to the 1971 Act; and

- (b) the trailer is used primarily as living accommodation by one or more persons and is not also used for the carriage of goods or burden which are not needed for the purpose of such residence in the vehicle,

item 1 in the Table applies with the substitution of 22 m for 18 m <sup>[F14]</sup> and item 1A in the Table does not apply].

<sup>[F15]</sup>(3) Items 1 <sup>[F16]</sup>, 1A], 3, 3A and 3B of the Table do not apply to—

- (a) a vehicle combination which includes a trailer which is constructed and normally used for the conveyance of indivisible loads of exceptional length, or
- (b) a vehicle combination consisting of a broken down vehicle (including an articulated vehicle) being drawn by a motor vehicle in consequence of a breakdown, <sup>F17</sup>...

<sup>[F18]</sup>(c) an articulated vehicle, the semi-trailer of which is a low loader manufactured before 1st April 1991 <sup>[F19]</sup>, or

- (d) a vehicle combination which includes—
  - (i) a motor vehicle of category N2, or
  - (ii) a motor vehicle of category N3,with an elongated cab].

(3A) Items 6, 7, 7A, 8 and 9 of the Table do not apply to—

- (a) a trailer which is constructed and normally used for the conveyance of indivisible loads of exceptional length,
- (b) a broken down vehicle (including an articulated vehicle) which is being drawn by a motor vehicle in consequence of a breakdown, or
- (c) a trailer being a drying or mixing plant designed for the production of asphalt or of bituminous or tar macadam and used mainly for the construction, repair or maintenance of roads, or a road planing machine so used.

(3B) Furthermore item 7 does not apply to—

- (a) a semi-trailer which is a car transporter,
- (b) a semi-trailer which is normally used on international journeys any part of which takes place outside the United Kingdom.]

<sup>[F20]</sup>(3C) Item 1A and the words “(other than a motor vehicle such as is mentioned in item 1A)” in item 1 of the Table shall cease to have effect after 31st December 2006.]

<sup>[F21]</sup>(3D) Item 4 of the Table does not apply to—

- (a) a motor vehicle of category N2, or
- (b) a motor vehicle of category N3,

with an elongated cab type approved in accordance with point 1.4 of Part C of Annex I of The Type Approval Masses and Dimensions Regulations, point 1.4 of Part C of Annex I of The Type Approval Masses and Dimensions Regulations (Northern Ireland), or point 1.4 of Part C of Annex I of The (European Union) Type Approval Masses and Dimensions Regulations.]

(4) Where a motor vehicle is drawing—

- (a) two trailers, then only one of those trailers may exceed an overall length of 7 m;
- (b) three trailers, then none of those trailers shall exceed an overall length of 7 m.

(5) Where a motor vehicle is drawing—

- (a) two or more trailers; or

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- (b) one trailer constructed and normally used for the conveyance of indivisible loads of exceptional length—

then—

- (i) the overall length of that motor vehicle shall not exceed 9.2 m; and
- (ii) the overall length of the combination of vehicles, calculated in accordance with regulation 81(g) and (h), shall not exceed 25.9 m, unless the conditions specified in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12 have been complied with.

[<sup>F22</sup>(5XA) A motor vehicle drawing a trailer which is not a semi-trailer shall (unless it is a vehicle such as is mentioned in item 1A of the Table in paragraph (1)) comply with the requirements of paragraph (5A).

The words in parenthesis in this paragraph shall cease to have effect after 31st December 2006.]

[<sup>F23</sup>(5A) The requirements of this paragraph, in relation to a combination of vehicles, are that at least one of the vehicles in the combination is not a goods vehicle or, if both vehicles in the combination are goods vehicles that—

- (a) the maximum distance measured parallel to the longitudinal axis of the combination of vehicles from the foremost point of the loading area behind the driver's cab to the rear of the trailer, less the distance between the rear of the motor vehicle and the front of the trailer, does not exceed 15.65m; and
- (b) the maximum distance measured parallel to the longitudinal axis of the combination of vehicles from the foremost point of the loading area behind the driver's cab to the rear of the trailer does not exceed [<sup>F24</sup>16.4 m];

but sub-paragraph (a) shall not apply if both vehicles in the combination are car transporters.]

[<sup>F25</sup>(6) The requirements of this paragraph, in relation to a semi-trailer, are that—

- (a) the longitudinal distance from the axis of the king pin <sup>F26</sup>... to the rear of the semi-trailer does not exceed—
- (i) 12.5m in the case of a car transporter, <sup>F27</sup>...
- [<sup>F28</sup>(ia) 12.15m when carrying one or more containers or swap bodies up to a total maximum length of 45 feet as part of an intermodal transport operation, or]
- (ii) 12m in any other case; and
- (b) no point in the semi-trailer forward of the transverse plane passing through the axis of the king pin <sup>F26</sup>... is more than—
- (i) 4.19m from the axis of the king pin, in the case of a car transporter, or
- (ii) 2.04m from the axis of the king pin, in any other case.

[<sup>F29</sup>(6A) For the purposes of paragraph (5A)—

- (a) where the forward end of the loading area of a motor vehicle is bounded by a wall, the thickness of the wall shall be regarded as part of the loading area; and
- (b) any part of a vehicle designed primarily for use as a means of attaching another vehicle to it and any fitting designed for use in connection with any such part shall be disregarded in determining the distance between the rear of a motor vehicle and the front of a trailer being drawn by it.]

(7) For the purpose of paragraph (6) the longitudinal distance from the axis of the king pin to the rear of a semi-trailer is the distance between a transverse plane passing through the axis of the king pin and [<sup>F30</sup>the rear of the semi-trailer].

[<sup>F31</sup>(7A) Where a semi-trailer has more than one king-pin or is constructed so that it can be used with a king-pin in different positions, references in this regulation to a distance from the king-pin shall be construed

- [<sup>F32</sup>(a) in relation to a vehicle which was manufactured after [<sup>F33</sup>1st January 1999], as a reference to the foremost king-pin or, as the case may be, the foremost king-pin position; and
- (b) in relation to any other vehicle, as a reference to the rearmost king-pin or, as the case may be, the rearmost king-pin position.]]

[<sup>F34</sup>(7B) For the purposes of paragraphs (5A), (6) and (7)—

- (a) a reference to the front of a vehicle is a reference to the transverse plane passing through the extreme forward projecting points of the vehicle; and
- (b) a reference to the rear of a vehicle is a reference to the transverse plane passing through the extreme rearward projecting points of the vehicle,

inclusive (in each case) of all parts of the vehicle, of any receptacle which is of a permanent character and accordingly strong enough for repeated use, and any fitting on, or attached to the vehicle but exclusive of—

- (i) the things set out in sub-paragraph (i) of the definition of “overall length” in the Table in regulation 3(2), and
- (ii) in the case of a semi-trailer, the things set out in sub-paragraph (ii)(a) of that definition.]

(8) Where a broken down articulated vehicle is being towed by a motor vehicle in consequence of a breakdown—

- (a) paragraph (5) shall have effect in relation to the combination of vehicles as if sub-paragraph (b) were omitted, and
- (b) for the purposes of paragraph (4) and of paragraph (5) as so modified, the articulated vehicle shall be regarded as a single trailer.]

[<sup>F35</sup>(9) No person shall use or cause or permit to be used on a road, a trailer with an overall length exceeding 18.65m unless the requirements of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12 are complied with.]

[<sup>F36</sup>(10) For the purposes of this regulation—

- (a) “a motor vehicle of category N2” means a vehicle of the type described in point (b) (ii) of Article 4(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/858 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on the approval and market surveillance of motor vehicles and their trailers, and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles, amending Regulations (EC) No 715/2007 and (EC) No 595/2009 and repealing Directive 2007/46/EC,
- (b) “a motor vehicle of category N3” means a vehicle of the type described in point (b) (iii) of Article 4(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/858 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on the approval and market surveillance of motor vehicles and their trailers, and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles, amending Regulations (EC) No 715/2007 and (EC) No 595/2009 and repealing Directive 2007/46/EC.]

#### Textual Amendments

- F1** Reg. 7(1) Table Items 1, 1A substituted (1.6.1998) by [The Road Vehicles \(Construction and Use\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 3\) Regulations 1998 \(S.I. 1998/1188\)](#), regs. 1, **4(2)(a)**
- F2** Word in reg. 7 Table substituted (1.4.2003) by [The Road Vehicles \(Construction and Use\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2003 \(S.I. 2003/182\)](#), regs. 1, **3(a)**

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- F3** Reg. 7 Table Item 2A inserted (1.4.2003) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/182), regs. 1, **3(c)**
- F4** Words in reg. 7(1) Table inserted (19.3.1990) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1990/317), regs. 1, **4(2)(a)**
- F5** Words in reg. 7(1) Table Item 3 inserted (1.6.1998) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/1188), regs. 1, **4(2)(b)**
- F6** Words in reg. 7(1) Table inserted (19.3.1990) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1990/317), regs. 1, **4(2)(b)**
- F7** Words in reg. 7(1) Table inserted (1.10.2017) by The Road Vehicles (Authorised Weight) and (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 (S.I. 2017/881), regs. 1, **10(1)**
- F8** Words in reg. 7 Table added (1.4.2003) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/182), regs. 1, **3(b)**
- F9** Reg. 7 Table Item 4A inserted (1.4.2003) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/182), regs. 1, **3(c)**
- F10** Reg. 7 Table Item 4B inserted (1.4.2003) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/182), regs. 1, **3(c)**
- F11** Words in reg. 7(1) Table inserted (19.3.1990) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1990/317), regs. 1, **4(2)(c)**
- F12** Reg. 7(1) Table inserted (19.3.1990) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1990/317), regs. 1, **4(2)(d)**
- F13** Words in reg. 7(1) Table inserted (19.3.1990) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1990/317), regs. 1, **4(2)(e)**
- F14** Words in reg. 7(2) added (17.10.1991) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2125), regs. 1, **4(3)**
- F15** Reg. 7(3)-(3B) substituted for reg. 7(3) (19.3.1990) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1990/317), regs. 1, **4(3)**
- F16** Word in reg. 7(3) inserted (17.10.1991) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2125), regs. 1, **4(4)**
- F17** Word in reg. 7(3) omitted (14.2.2022) by virtue of The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 (S.I. 2022/59), regs. 1(2), **4(a)(i)**
- F18** Reg. 7(3)(c) and word added (29.6.1990) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1990/1163), regs. 1, **3(2)** (with reg. 2(2))
- F19** Reg. 7(3)(d) and word inserted (14.2.2022) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 (S.I. 2022/59), regs. 1(2), **4(a)(ii)**
- F20** Reg. 7(3C) inserted (1.6.1998) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/1188), regs. 1, **4(3)**
- F21** Reg. 7(3D) inserted (14.2.2022) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 (S.I. 2022/59), regs. 1(2), **4(b)**
- F22** Reg. 7(5XA) inserted (1.6.1998) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/1188), regs. 1, **4(4)**
- F23** Reg. 7(5A) inserted (17.10.1991) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2125), regs. 1, **4(5)**
- F24** Word in reg. 7(5A)(b) substituted (1.6.1998) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/1188), regs. 1, **4(5)**
- F25** Reg. 7(6)-(8) substituted for reg. 7(6) (19.3.1990) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1990/317), regs. 1, **4(4)**
- F26** Words in reg. 7(6)(a)(b) omitted (29.6.1990) by virtue of The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1990/1163), regs. 1, **3(3)** (with reg. 2(2))
- F27** Word in reg. 7(6)(a) omitted (1.10.2017) by virtue of The Road Vehicles (Authorised Weight) and (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 (S.I. 2017/881), regs. 1, **10(2)(a)**
- F28** Words in reg. 7(6)(a)(ia) inserted (1.10.2017) by The Road Vehicles (Authorised Weight) and (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 (S.I. 2017/881), regs. 1, **10(2)(b)**

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- F29** Reg. 7(6A) inserted (17.10.1991) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2125), regs. 1, **4(6)**
- F30** Words in reg. 7(7) substituted (17.10.1991) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2125), regs. 1, **4(7)**
- F31** Reg. 7(7A) inserted (29.6.1990) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1990/1163), regs. 1, **3(4)** (with reg. 2(2))
- F32** Words in reg. 7(7A) substituted (1.6.1998) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/1188), regs. 1, **4(6)**
- F33** Words in reg. 7(7A)(a) substituted (1.1.1999) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 7) Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/3112), regs. 1, **4**
- F34** Reg. 7(7B) inserted (17.10.1991) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2125), regs. 1, **4(8)**
- F35** Reg. 7(9) inserted (17.10.1991) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2125), regs. 1, **4(9)**
- F36** Reg. 7(10) inserted (14.2.2022) by The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 (S.I. 2022/59), regs. 1(2), **4(c)**

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#### Commencement Information

- I1** Reg. 7 in force at 11.8.1986, see **reg. 1**

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