

What is Mass Management Accreditation?

Mass Management is one of the three modules of operator accreditation under the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme (NHVAS), the other modules are Maintenance Management and Fatigue Management.

NHVAS is a National Quality Assurance system where transport operators have systems and processes in place to meet the standards of accreditation set by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR).

Accredited operators are required to have their systems, processes and records independently verified by authorised NHVAS Auditors on a regular basis.

The regular reviews by NHVAS Auditors ensure that the operator is keeping the required records and complying with their own quality procedures. If an operator does not meet the required standards their accreditation can be suspended or cancelled.

In return, operators gain substantial benefits, such as protection under Chain of Responsibility (CoR) legislation, increased payloads (Mass Management), increased operational hours (Fatigue Management) and the removal of the requirement for annual Roadworthiness Inspections which is a requirement for some heavy vehicle registrations (Maintenance Management).

For Mass Management the following is required:

The operator must have a comprehensive Quality or Procedures Manual which documents the various processes that are in place to ensure that vehicles are loaded within legal limits.

Nominated vehicles must have the required NHVAS Accreditation label affixed and must have manufacturer's ratings sufficient for the increased weights permitted

Drivers are required to be inducted in all aspects of the operator's system, this may not be a formal course and will depend on the complexity of the operation and the experience of the driver.

At a minimum drivers should be provided with some basic instructions and introduction into what is required including the requirement to monitor and record axle group weights.

Vehicles loaded to Higher Mass Limits (HML) are restricted to approved routes and drivers need to have an understanding of the route restrictions applicable to vehicles they are operating.

The operator is required to have a procedure in place outlining what to do if weights are found to be in excess of the limits permitted. The procedure must include a corrective process to minimise overloading instances, all overloads should be documented so the overall compliance of the operations are recorded and monitored. Whilst the occasional overload cannot be completely avoided, the system should include various instructions, checks and processes to ensure loading is within legal limits.

To ensure that road pavement damage, caused by malfunctioning suspension systems, the operator must have a process for recording any suspension faults occurring, this will normally be a pre departure checklist and fault report sheet completed by drivers. Regular suspension maintenance must also be completed for all vehicles and trailers.

Driver Instructions for Mass Management

1. Ensure that the required documents and books, including Gazettes, Mass Loading Record Book (*) and Interception Report Book, are in the vehicle and are current. Make sure you read these documents.
2. A plastic folder or similar will keep them clean and usable and shows that you are taking pride in your work if pulled over for a check.
3. Ensure that you have been adequately instructed on what is expected of you in regards to operating under Mass Management accreditation. This guide has been designed to assist you to understand your responsibilities and duties. The operator has a procedures manual detailing all the various requirements, if you want detailed information you can refer to the company manual.
4. For each load you are required to record the details of the trip in Mass Loading Record (*), this includes time, date, registration, origin and destination etc. A vehicle pre trip check is also required to be completed. Once completed, tick the appropriate box to indicate you have completed the required checks. Faults should be recorded on the sheet provided in the rear of the Mass Loading Record book (*).
5. Load the vehicle and check the drive and trailer axle group weights using weight scales or pressure gauges, record the weight or gauge readings for each trip in the columns provided. Prime mover steer axle weight will need to be established however for prime movers, once this is known it will generally not alter for standard loads. Shift or reduce the load if the gauges or weighbridge indicate the axle groups are over the legal limits. Remember that it is important to ensure axle group weights are correct, do not focus solely on gross weight, as gross weight can be okay however you can be over on an individual axle group weight.
6. At least monthly you need to complete a “check weigh” or “verification weight” this is a check of the accuracy of the gauges or other process used to assess the weights. This needs to be completed on a weighbridge after you have loaded and assessed the axle group weights. On the weighbridge, record the actual weights, record this weight in the Mass Loading Record as a “Check Weigh” (*). This weight should be close to the assessed weight recorded from the pressure gauge reading, although not exactly the same.
7. The Interception Book, this book should be completed by the intercepting officer if you are pulled over, some officers will not complete the book, request the book be completed however don't press the issue. Copies of Interception slips are returned by the officer to the NHVR and retained for audit purposes. Interception slips record all instances where vehicles are checked on the road, even when no issues or offences are detected. Always request an Interception report be completed if no adverse issues are found.
8. Record all loads, if a load is found to be overweight (ie when you deliver to a receival centre), record the weight honestly and contact the office for advice. A Non Conformance Report (NCR) is required to be completed for larger overloads, this is no big deal, just documenting what has occurred and putting in place a process to prevent a reoccurrence. You are not helping by hiding records of the occasional overweight load, if “it” happens, we have to deal with it, not hide it.

Finally, if you need advice, have questions or need help, ring MassManagement.com on freecall **1300 35 00 89**. This number will divert to a trained and experienced consultant who can provide on the spot advice and guidance, please do not hesitate to contact this number.

(*) Your operation may use a different process to record these items such as the “Driver Run Sheet” or Manifest documentation

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