

Operating a mobile crane in Victoria

Industry Guide

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Introduction

A vibrant construction industry and Victoria's strong investment in infrastructure have triggered a rapid expansion in the number of cranes registered in Victoria.

This guide has been developed in collaboration with the Crane Industry Council of Australia (CICA) to help the industry operate mobile cranes on the Victorian road network.

Definition of a mobile crane

A crane is a machine intended for the hoisting and moving in space of a load suspended by means of a hook or other load-handling device.

A mobile crane is a crane capable of travelling over a supporting surface without the need for fixed runways and relying only on gravity for stability.

Safe Work Australia classes multi-purpose powered mobile plant, tool carriers and telescopic handlers as cranes in some operating configurations.

Mobile cranes are often designated as class 1 special-purpose vehicles under Heavy Vehicle National Law.

The purpose of this guide

This guide is designed for current and prospective operators of mobile cranes. Its focus is on registration and access in Victoria. It should be read in conjunction with information supplied by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR).

It provides general information only. For tailored advice, particularly in relation to charges and importation of equipment, a consultant should be engaged.

Types of cranes

Off-road or construction site

A crane classed as a plant-based special purpose vehicle (PSV) is built or modified to operate off-road. It can be tracked or tractor-type in design. It has limited mobility and is floated between sites.



On-road general access

A crane built or modified for on-road use (either purpose built or mounted on a truck-type body) are known as truck-based special-purpose vehicle (TSV) cranes. All axles or axle groups on TSV cranes must comply with general mass limits (GML). TSV cranes have general access and a condition of registration is that they must operate at normal speeds when moving between sites.

On-road with permit or gazette

Like TSV cranes, oversized special purpose vehicle (OSV) cranes are designed for on-road use. They can be purpose-built or mounted on a truck body and operate at up to 80kmh on highways when moving between sites. OSV cranes are over-mass and exceed GML. They are Class 1 Special Purpose Vehicles.



Importing a mobile crane

There are up to five steps to importing a mobile crane.

Step 1 Apply for in-principle support

In-principle support is a prerequisite to importing a mobile crane. Apply for in-principle support through the [NHVR portal](#). The NHVR will determine whether the vehicle meets Australian Design Rules (ADRs) or Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation (VS) and whether an exemption is required.

Further information on in-principle support can be found at <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/safety-accreditation-compliance/vehicle-standards-and-modifications/applications/in-principle-support-for-non-standard-road-vehicles>

Step 2 Comply with statement of requirements

The NHVR will issue a statement of requirements or advisory letter detailing the conditions that must be met to enable a VS exemption.

The statement of requirements must be certified by an examiner approved to undertake VS exemptions in Victoria.



Step 3 Apply for approval to import a mobile crane

Refer to <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure-transport-vehicles/vehicles/importing-road-vehicle-australia>

Step 4 Obtain a weigh-and-inspection certificate

Further information can be found below in *Determining a crane's mass*.

Step 5 Apply for a VS exemption permit

Check the gazette <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021G00651> to see if you need to apply for a VS exemption permit. In-principle support determines your type of road access.



Registering a mobile crane

There are up to five steps to register a mobile crane in Victoria.

Step 1 Obtain a weigh-and-inspection certificate

A weigh-and-inspection certificate is only required if a crane has not been previously registered in Australia.

Further information can be found below in *Determining a crane's compliance*.

Step 2 Apply for a VS exemption permit

Check the gazette <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021G00651> to see if you need to apply for a VS exemption permit through the NHVR portal. In-principle support determines your type of road access.

Step 3 Make an appointment to register your mobile crane

Further information can be found below in *Registration requirements*.

Step 4 Apply for an NHVR road access permit

Further information can be found below in *Applying for road access*

Step 5 Enrol in a monitoring program

All-terrain cranes with four axles or more, as well as mobile cranes with a forward projection greater than 5.5m, must be enrolled in either the Telematics Monitoring Application (TMA) or the Intelligent Access Program (IAP).

Determining a crane's compliance

A weigh-and-inspection certificate confirms the vehicle has not been altered or modified from the specifications in the application for in-principle support.

The certificate also determines whether your crane operates under a Gazette Notice or if a permit is required.

Cranes must be weighed on-site with portable scales. Weighbridges must not be used. Weigh-and-inspection certificates obtained interstate are valid in Victoria.

Approved examiners are available by contacting

- CICA <https://cica.com.au/scalehire> or
- NHVR Safety and Compliance HVescorts@nhvr.gov.au or 0417 091 454.

Both providers charge a fee.

Moving an unregistered crane

If your crane is not yet registered and needs to be moved, it can be:

- Driven using an unregistered vehicle permit (as long as the move is under the relevant VS and access gazette notice or NHVR access permit); and
- Fitted with trade plates; or
- Floated on a low loader.

Access to the road network for an over-size over-mass low loader is only available by a Gazette Notice or permit.

Detail on the gazetted network is at <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/business-and-industry/heavy-vehicle-industry/heavy-vehicle-map-networks-in-victoria/cl1-spv-osom>

Further information can be found below in *Applying for access*.



Registration requirements

Making an appointment

Before contacting VicRoads, make sure you have:

- the vehicle identification number (VIN) or chassis number of the mobile crane
- the make, model and previous registration number of the mobile crane (if previously registered)
- your licence or customer number

You'll need to pay an appointment fee when making your appointment.

Make an appointment by:

- Visiting a VicRoads Customer Service Centre; or
- Booking online at vicroads.vic.gov.au; or
- Calling VicRoads on 13 1171 and paying by credit.

Registration rates and codes

Registration and TAC rate codes and motor vehicle duty payable for each crane type can be found in Table 1.

Registration fees can be found on the VicRoads Registration Heavy Vehicles Fees page at <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/registration/registration-fees/heavy-vehicle-fees>

TAC rate charges can be found on the TAC website <https://www.tac.vic.gov.au/>

Motor Vehicle Duty

Motor Vehicle Duty is payable for all mobile cranes upon initial registration, except for PSVs or cranes owned and operated as primary producer vehicles. Motor Vehicle Duty is not payable for a crane registered interstate where there is no change to the name of the owner.

What to bring to your appointment

For OSV, PSV and non-ADR compliant TSVs, bring

- VS exemption permit or evidence of exemption (where required)
- A weigh-and-inspection certificate
- A completed Machinery Pack form
- Authority to act as an agent if the crane is being registered in a company name

For TSV cranes built on an ADR-compliant truck body, bring

- VS exemption permit or evidence of exemption (where required)
- A weigh-and-inspection certificate
- a vehicle registration application form
- a Certificate of Roadworthiness (RWC)
- authority to act as an agent if the crane is being registered in a company name

For further information on how to book a registration appointment go to https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/-/media/files/formsandpublications/registration/machinery_pack.ashx?la=en&hash=5F661E5AAC8EAC3B48313AC264E9E8D5

Crane type		PSV	TSV	OSV
Heavy vehicle GVM >4.5t	Registration rate code	PSV	TSV	TSV
	TAC rate code	41	41	41
	Motor vehicle duty payable	No	Yes	Yes
Light vehicle GVM < 4.5t	Registration rate code	PF	VL	NA
	TAC rate code	41	41	NA
	Motor vehicle duty payable	No	Yes	NA

Table 1 Standard registration rates (12 months) and TAC codes ¹

1. See also <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/registration/registration-fees/heavy-vehicle-fees>

Transferring a mobile crane to your name

To transfer a mobile crane to your name, complete an application for transfer of registration. A weigh-and-inspection certificate is not required. For a TSV crane built on an ADR-compliant truck body, an RWC is required.

RWC

Mobile cranes without an Australian compliance plate do not need an RWC.

An RWC is only required when registering or transferring the registration of a vehicle that has a compliance plate or is compliant with the ADRs. Permits for cranes with a VS permit can be obtained from the NHVR portal.

When is a crane over mass?

For the purpose of registration, a crane is deemed over mass if any of its axles or axle groups operate above 7.0t GML. The formula used to determine this is:

$$\text{GVM} \div \text{number of axles} = x$$

A vehicle is over mass if x is greater than 7.0t.

For example, a crane with four axles and a 30t GVM will be over mass because each axle will have a mass of 7.5t.

The crane's dimensions (length, width and height) are not considerations in determining whether the vehicle is over mass.



Figure 1 – Configurations operating under Gazette Notice



Applying for road access

Mobile cranes are Class 1 heavy vehicles with access to Victoria's gazetted and pre-approved heavy vehicle network.

Gazetted networks

Gazetted networks provide blanket approval for a range of complying vehicles, allowing access to specified roads without the need for a permit. Cranes operating on a gazetted network must meet all conditions set out in the Gazette Notice.

Networks are gazetted for the following vehicle types.

- 2-axle SPVs including 2-axle articulated steering cranes and 2-axle all-terrain mobile cranes.
- 40t SPVs including 3-axle all-terrain mobile cranes; 3-axle articulated steering cranes; 3-axle crane trucks; 4-axle mobile concrete pumps; and 4-axle truck cranes
- 4-and-5-axle all-terrain mobile cranes

A guide to configurations operating under Gazette Notice is at Figure 1.

Further information on SPVs operating up to 40-tonne GVM under Gazette Notice is at <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/C2021G00652>

Further information on 4-axle & 5-axle all-terrain mobile cranes operating under Gazette Notice is at <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/files/201607-0378-info-sheet-vic-class-1-4-5-axle-all-terrain-mobile-crane-mass-and-dimension-exemption.pdf>

Pre-approved networks

The 2-axle articulated-steering Humma crane (28t GVM) as well as 6, 7, 8 and 9-axle all-terrain cranes that match the dimensions of a reference vehicle are covered by pre-approved networks.

Operators must apply for an access permit, however road manager consent is automatic.

A summary of the reference vehicle dimensions can be found in Table 2. The pre-approved networks can be found at

<https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/business-and-industry/heavy-vehicle-industry/heavy-vehicle-map-networks-in-victoria/cl1-spv-osom>

Access to roads not covered by a pre-approved or gazetted network

Applications for access to roads not covered by a pre-approved or gazetted network are made through the NHVR portal. The NHVR will allocate your application to the relevant road manager.

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) is the road manager for Victoria's arterial road network. Local government is the road manager for local roads. Road managers determine whether a bridge assessment is required.

Access permit types

Period permit

A period permit allows for an unspecified number of trips and applies to a specific route, area or network. While access can be more restrictive than a single-trip permit, a period permit is useful where a crane is required to move regularly between multiple job sites.

Single-trip permit

A single-trip permit allows for one specific trip on a single route, which can include a return journey. It offers broader access than a period permit due to its limited impact on the road network.

More information on how to apply for a permit can be found at <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/road-access/access-management/applications>

Table 2 - Summary of Class 1 SPV dimension limits for gazetted and pre-approved networks

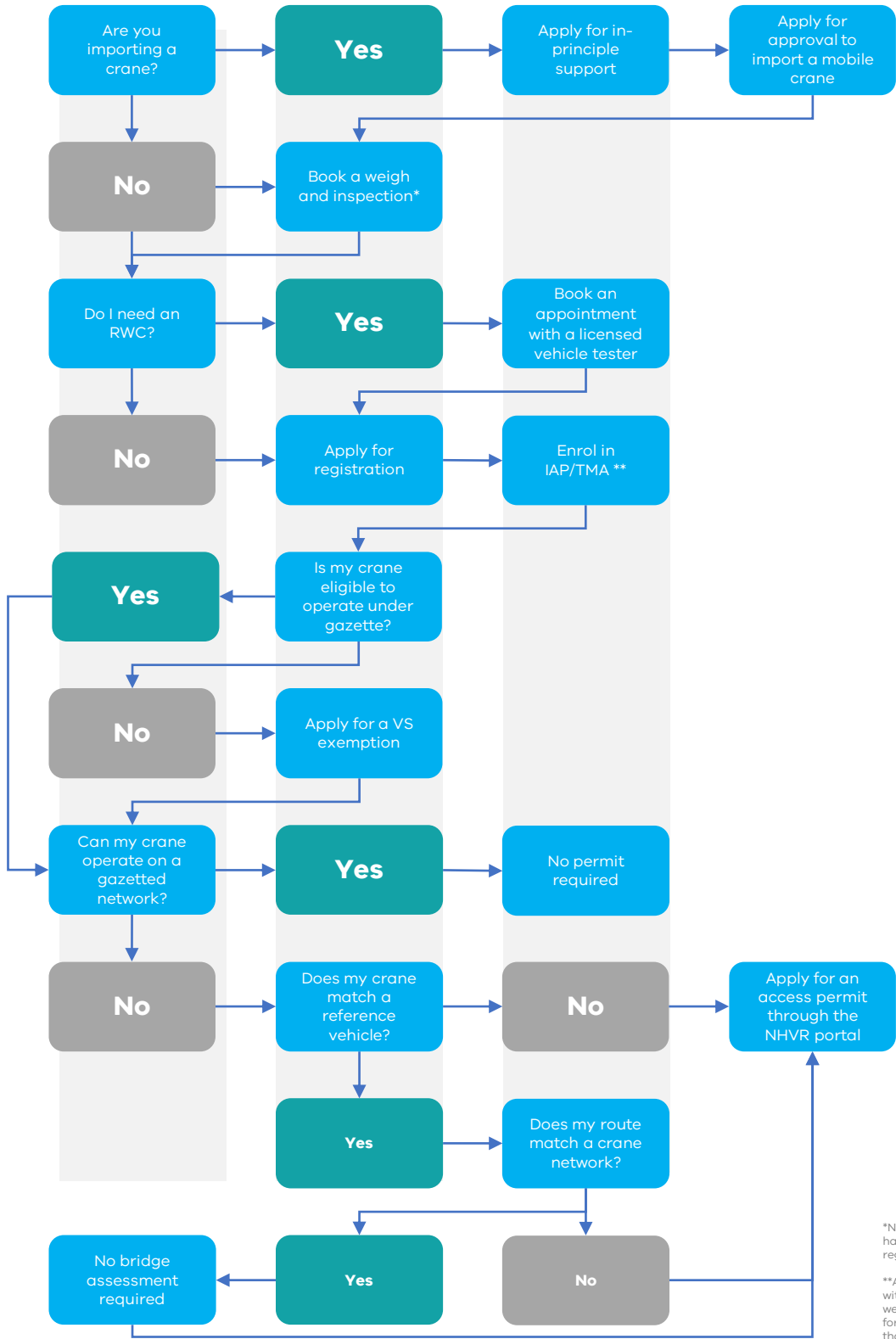
	2-axle SPV (mobile cranes)	40t SPV (3-axle/4- axle cranes)	4 & 5-axle all terrain mobile cranes	6, 7, 8 & 9- axle cranes
Height	4.6m	4.6m	4.6m	4.6m
Width	3.5m	3.5m	3.5m	3.5m
Length	14.5m	14.5m	16.5m	27.5m
Projection in front of the centre of the steering wheel for mobile cranes	3.5m ²	3.5m ²	3.5m	3.5m
Rear overhang³	Lesser of 4m or 90% of wheelbase ⁴			
Axle mass limits	See Gazette Notice	See Gazette Notice	See Gazette Notice	See the relevant information sheet

2. Can be up to 4m for all-terrain cranes or up to 5.5 m for articulated-steering cranes.

3. Distance measured between the rear of the vehicle and the rear overhang line of the vehicle. See [Gazette Notice](#)

4. Can be exceeded if certain conditions are met. See [Gazette Notice](#)

Getting a mobile crane onto the Victorian road network



*Not required where a vehicle has been previously registered in Australia.

**Applies to all-terrain cranes with four axles or more, as well as mobile cranes with a forward projection greater than 5.5m

Crossing tracks

Some mobile cranes require a separate permit to cross rail or tram tracks. The gazetted network or your NHVR permit will indicate whether you need to apply for a rail permit. DTP issues permits to cross metropolitan train or tram tracks. Permits to cross V/Line or ARTC tracks are handled by the respective track manager.

Further information on crossing rail and tram tracks is available in the information sheet *ODL Vehicles Crossing Tramways and Railways* available at <https://transport.vic.gov.au/getting-around/roads/over-dimensional-load-permits-for-travel-across-railways-and-tramways>.

Compliance

Cranes operate under Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) which is administered by the NHVR. Enforcement is carried out by Safety and Compliance Officers (SCOs). They may ask you to stop and show relevant documentation for your crane's operation and may also measure and weigh your vehicle.



Documents to be carried

If you are travelling under gazette in Victoria there is no need to carry the relevant Gazette Notice. If you are travelling under permit, you are required to carry the relevant permit(s) with you.

A driver can present documents requested by an SCO in electronic or hard copy. Documents that must be provided in hard copy include:

- specific requirements such as a condition on a permit or notice; and
- information recorded on a written work diary that would otherwise be inaccessible on the roadside.

Electronic documents must be presented on a device with a visual display that an SCO can read and understand without entering the vehicle. Documents must be on hand and cannot be downloaded from another location after the vehicle has been stopped. A USB storage device on its own is not acceptable but can be used in conjunction with a separate device to display the relevant documents.



Additional resources

Further information on the process used by the NHVR to assess Class 1 and Class 3 permit applications is at <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/road-access/access-management/applications>

Five tips to facilitate a fast permit turnaround is at [Top tips for operators to reduce application processing time \(PDF, 643KB\)](#)

An interactive, online mapping tool that assists in finding approved routes for heavy vehicles and determining permit requirements is at [NHVR Route Planner](#)

